Cosmic Consciousness

A Study in the Evolution of the Human Mind

Edited by DR. RICHARD MAURICE BUCKE

Verily, verily I say unto thee, except a man be born anew he cannot see the kingdom of God

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Chapter 9.

Francis Bacon.

Born 1561; died 1626.

Nothing approaching to an exhaustive study of this case can be attempted here. The mere flanges of the subject have filled a moderate-sized library, while the core of the matter has hardly been touched upon.

I.

Without more ado or any beating about the bush it may as well be frankly stated at once that the view of the present editor is:

a. That Francis Bacon wrote the "Shakespeare" plays and poems.

b. That he entered into Cosmic Consciousness at about the age of thirty, or perhaps a year earlier, as his intellectual and moral development was very precocious.

c. That he began writing the "Sonnets" immediately after his illumination. The "Sonnets," as considered here, are the first one hundred and twenty-six, which distinctly constitute a poem in and by themselves and deal with the subject here considered.

d. That the earlier of these one hundred and twenty-six "Sonnets" are addressed to the Cosmic Sense, and the later to it and its offspring, the plays.

e. That in the "Sonnets" the following individualities may be recognized: (a) the Cosmic Sense; (b) the Bacon of the Cosmic Sense, and of the plays and "Sonnets;" (c) the special offspring of the Cosmic Sense—the plays; (d) the ostensible Bacon of the court, politics, prose writings, business, etc., and possibly others.

II.

It is not absolutely denied that the first one hundred and twenty-six "Sonnets" can be read as if addressed to a young male friend (although in the case of several this might be, it seems to the writer, successfully disputed), but it is clear that so read they lack meaning and dignity—that, in fact, looked at from this point of view, they are entirely unworthy of the man (whoever he was) who wrote "Lear" and "Macbeth." And it may be claimed that an almost (or quite) constant characteristic of the writings of
the class of men dealt with in this volume is exactly this double meaning corresponding with the duplex personality of the writer. Of this double, often triple, meaning the works of Dante and Whitman supply perhaps the best examples.

T. S. Baynes [86 : 764] says that these speculations “cannot be regarded as successful;” but let us, for the sake of argument, suppose that there really was such a young man, such a dark woman [Mary Fitton, 167 : 30 et seq. or another], that would prove absolutely nothing. These people might have had a real existence and might have been spoken to and spoken of as the superficial meaning of the “Sonnets,” just as the ocean is spoken to and of in the superficial meaning of “With Husky Haughty Lips” [193 : 392]. Or take for another example the “Prayer of Columbus” [193 : 323]. Columbus might have made just such a prayer, and there is no reason why Whitman should not have put such a prayer into his mouth; but nothing is more certain than that the words in question are addressed to the All Powerful by Whitman himself. But why select instances? There is perhaps not a line in the “Leaves” which has one meaning only. Then who to-day does not understand that in the “Divine Comedy” Dante used the theological terms current in his day to veil and express far deeper and loftier thoughts than had theretofore ever been annexed to them? Attach the current signification to the terms used and his verses had one meaning, but ascribe to these terms his intention and they have another vastly wider and deeper. So his last and best translator, who undoubtedly knew him profoundly, says that “a far deeper-lying and more-prevailing source of imperfect comprehension of the poem than any verbal difficulty exists in the double or triple meaning that runs through it” [70 : 16]. Or is “Seraphita” a sort of fairy tale having for central figure an idealized hysterico-maniacal Norwegian girl?

III.

That a man having Cosmic Consciousness is, in fact, at least a dual person is abundantly shown and illustrated in the present volume, and “Shakepeare,” the author of the plays and “Sonnets,” is really another (while the same) self of the Bacon who wrote the prose works, spoke in Parliament, lived before the world as jurist, courtier and citizen. Just as “Seraphita” (Seraphitus), while being Balzac, is totally distinct from the ostensible Balzac who was seen in Parisian drawing rooms. Just as the Whitman of the “Leaves” is wholly distinct (yet the same) from the Whitman who rode on omnibusses and ferries, “lived the same life with the rest,” and died in Cam-
den, March 26, 1892. Just as "Gabriel," while being Mohammed, is at the same time another and distinct personality.

This identity (at the same time) and disparateness is the true solution (it is believed) of the Bacon-Shakespeare controversy.

IV.

It is perhaps impossible for the merely self conscious man to form any conception of what this oncoming of Cosmic Consciousness must be to those who experience it. The man is lifted out of his old self and lives rather in heaven than upon the old earth—more correctly the old earth becomes heaven. One of the prime necessities of this period is solitude. Why? Probably because the person is so occupied with, so enraptured by, his new world (his new self), that he simply cannot bear to be called back to the old world (the old self). So Balac would (at this period of his life) shut himself up—hide himself—for weeks and months at a stretch. So Paul conferred not with flesh and blood, "neither went up to Jerusalem" [22: 1-17], but "away into Arabia," and seems to have lived very much to himself for some time. Solitude (although naturally he was so eminently sociable) became, under the same circumstances, a necessity to Whitman, and in the early part of his Cosmic Conscious life he would frequently spend days, weeks and even months at a stretch in the sparsely peopled or uninhabited districts of Long Island—especially along the seashore.

Immediately upon the illumination of Jesus (if we can depend upon the account given in Matthew and Mark) he was "led up of the spirit into the wilderness," and remained in solitude for a certain time. And it is probable that sufficient research would reveal action of this kind as universal in pronounced cases. Be this as it may, Spedding [174: 49] says that: "From April, 1590, until the latter part of 1591 [nearly two years] I find no other composition of Bacon's [than a letter of five pages!] nor any important piece of news concerning him." While (referring to the very same period in his life) Bacon says, writing to Burghley late in 1591 or early in 1592, when he was thirty-one years old, and, according to the hypothesis, one to two years after his illumination: "I do not fear that action shall impair it [his health], because I account my ordinary course of study and meditation to be more painful [more laborious] than most parts of action are" [174: 56].

Then again it seems that, especially during these two years, 1590 and 1591, Bacon frequently, to use his own words, "fled into the shade" at
Twickenham and "enjoyed the blessings of contemplation in that sweet solitariness which collecteth the mind as shutting the eyes doth the sight" [129: 71]. So "there are times noted by Mr. Spedding when Bacon wrote with closed doors, and when the subject of his studies is doubtful; and there is one long vacation of which the same careful biographer remarks that he cannot tell what work the indefatigable student produced during those months, for that he knows of none whose date corresponds with the period" [129: 71–2]. And doubtless Mrs. Pott is in the right when she suggests that it was during such periods and probably during 1590–91 that many of the early plays were written [129: 71].

V.

Thus we have the frame into which to set the picture: Bacon's mind is exceedingly precocious and he enters Cosmic Consciousness, let us suppose, early in 1590, at or shortly after the age of twenty-nine; he had probably written several plays before that, a few of which may have been thought worthy of inclusion in the 1623 folio. In the spring of 1590 (in his thirtieth year) he acquires the Cosmic Sense. For the next two years (1590–91) he is much secluded and produces a number of plays, while, as a sort of running commentary upon his mental experiences and his work, he wrote the earlier "Sonnets," the rest being written one or two at a time as occasion called them forth, between this period and the date of their publication—1609.

It would be proper in this place to give some account of Bacon's personality were it not that the subject is too large for the limits of this volume. The question which concerns us here is, of course: were his intellect and moral nature (especially the latter) such as belong to persons having Cosmic Consciousness? Upon the answers to the last half of this question a doubt (fostered chiefly by Pope and Macaulay) has arisen. The point cannot be argued here. All that can be said is that the present writer believes that Bacon was as great morally as he was intellectually; and he believes that whoever will take the pains to seriously consider the standard works on the subject written by able and impartial men (such as Dixon's "Personal History" [75], Spedding's "Life and Times" [174], Spedding's "Evenings with a Reviewer" [177], and especially the "Life," by Rawley, who knew Bacon well) will inevitably come to the same conclusion. Rawley says of him: "He was free from malice; he was no revenger of injuries; he was no defamer of any man; but would always say the best that could be said of
any person, even an enemy” [141 : 52]. And after many years study of the 
subject Spedding sums up as follows:

The evidence which everybody had to judge from led me to suppose him a very 
different person from what he was commonly taken for. That idea led me to seek for 
进一步 evidence, and all the further evidence which I discovered confirmed the impres-
sion. I do not find fault with people for not knowing what advice Bacon gave the 
king about calling a parliament and dealing with it; but I say that the tenor of the 
advice, being now produced, shows that they were very bad guessers; that the inference 
they drew as to Bacon’s character from the very abundant evidence which they had 
before them was strangely inaccurate; as far from the truth as if one should hold up 
Flavius as an example of a bad steward, because the economy was bad of the house in 
which he served. I take these newly discovered pieces as tests. If I had been wrong, 
they would have convicted me; if Macaulay had been right, they would have confirmed 
him [178 : 189].

And then, at the end of his book, after all the facts of Bacon’s life that 
have come down to us had been reviewed and considered he goes on:

For myself at least, much as one must grieve over such a fall of such a man, and 
so forlorn a close of such a life, I have always felt that had he not fallen, or had he 
fallen upon a fortune less desolate in its outward conditions, I should never have known 
how good and how great a man he really was—hardly, perhaps, how great and how 
invincible a thing intrinsic goodness is. Turning from the world without to the world 
which was within him, I know nothing more inspiring, more affecting, more sublime, 
than the undaunted energy, the hopefulness, trustfulness, clearness, patience, and com-
posure, with which his spirit sustained itself under that most depressing fortune. The 
heart of Job himself was not so sorely tried, nor did it pass the trial better. Through 
the many volumes which he produced during these five years, I find no idle repining, 
no vain complaint of others, no weak justification of himself; no trace of a disgusted, a 
despairing or a faltering mind [178 : 407].

Compare with this estimate of Bacon’s mental attitude under the depressing 
circumstances of his last years the undying and inexhaustible cheer of 
Walt Whitman, Jacob Behmen, and William Blake in like case.

VI.

Here (while speaking of the personal traits of this man) will be as good 
an opportunity as any to quote a few passages which seem to glance at some 
certain quality in Bacon’s mind such as this master faculty of which there is 
question in this book. For instance, Rawley [141 : 47], as a result of per-
sonal observation, says of him: “I have been induced to think that if there 
were a beam of knowledge derived from God upon any man in these modern 
times, it was upon him. For though he was a great reader of books, yet he 
had not his knowledge from books, but from some grounds and notions 
from within himself; which, notwithstanding, he vented with great caution
and circumspection." In other words, Rawley thinks that Bacon was inspired, and says that he was exceedingly careful in publishing the truths or ideas derived from that source. And this is exactly what is claimed by the present editor and one reason for the concealed authorship of the plays and sonnets.

Note again these words of Bacon’s, taken from his essay “Of Truth” [35:82]: “The first creature of God, in the works of the days, was the light of the sense; the last was the light of reason; and his Sabbath work ever since is the illumination of his spirit.” In other words: In the evolution of the human mind simple consciousness was first produced; then self consciousness; and lastly, there is being produced to-day Cosmic Consciousness. Bacon proceeds: “First he breathed light upon the face of the matter of chaos [and produced life, simple consciousness]; then he breathed light into the face of man [and produced self consciousness]; and still he breatheth and inspireth light into the face of his chosen” [endowing them with Cosmic Consciousness]. Compare: “It has been said, great are the senses, greater than the senses is the mind [simple consciousness], greater than the mind is the understanding [self consciousness]. What is greater than the understanding is that [Cosmic Consciousness]. Thus knowing that which is higher than the understanding and restraining yourself by yourself [note the inevitable reduplication of the individual], destroy the unmanageable enemy in the shape of desire” [154:57]. And again: “It is not by reasoning that the law is to be found, it is beyond the pale of reasoning” [164:39].

It is worthy of notice that Bacon seems to have recognized an interval between the light of reason and the illumination of the spirit as great as the interval between the light of sense and that of reason. That is, he recognized as great an interval between Cosmic and Self Consciousness as exists between the latter and simple consciousness—just as is claimed by the present writer. But within the field of self consciousness where could he find such an interval as this between reason and anything above reason?

Again in his great prayer [175:469] Bacon says:

I am a debtor to Thee for the gracious talent of Thy gifts and graces, which I have neither put into a napkin, nor put it (as I ought) to exchangers, where it might have made best profit; but misspent it in things for which I was least fit; so as I may truly say, my soul hath been a stranger in the course of my pilgrimage.

The talent in question is the Cosmic Sense. He did not let it lie idle, but he did not make as much use of it as he might and ought to have done. He should have lived his life for it (as Gautama, Jesus and Paul did) whereas he tried to live (did live) two lives and misspent a large part of his life “in things for which he was least fit”—law, politics, etc.; so it may be truly said his soul (the Bacon of the Cosmic Sense) was a stranger in the life of the ostensible (the self conscious) Bacon.
The Cosmic Sense produced the plays. If Bacon had openly lived his whole life for the Cosmic Sense what other perhaps greater works might he not have produced? And instead of his almost hidden, misunderstood life, we might have had another of those open, exalted lives, each one of which is a source of endless inspiration to the race which is slowly toiling up from what we see around us to that divine goal.

To close this part of the subject, glance at two other short extracts. The first from the "Plan of the Work," the second from the "Novum Organum." Bacon says:

If we labor in thy works with the sweat of our brows thou wilt make us partakers of thy vision and thy Sabbath. Humbly we pray that this mind may be steadfast in us, and that through these our hands, and the hands of others to whom thou shalt give the same spirit, thou wilt vouchsafe to endow the human family with new mercies [34:54].

And again:

I may say then of myself that which one said in jest (since it marks the distinction so truly): “It cannot be that we should think alike, when one drinks water and the other drinks wine.” Now, other men, as well in ancient as in modern times, have in the matter of sciences drunk a crude liquor like water, either flowing spontaneously from the understanding, or drawn up by logic, as by wheels from a well. Whereas I pledge mankind in a liquor strained from countless grapes, from grapes ripe and fully seasoned, collected in clusters, and gathered, and then squeezed in the press, and finally purified and clarified in the vat. And therefore it is no wonder if they and I do not think alike [34:155].

This passage seems to plainly allude to a higher spiritual life, which may be attained to in this life, and of which it may be supposed the writer had had experience.

If the "liquor strained from countless grapes" is not the Cosmic Sense it does not seem very clear what it is.

VII.

This, of course, is not the place for a discussion of the authorship of the plays, but since it is here taken as certain that they are to be credited to Bacon, it will be right to give a few of the principal reasons for the adoption of that view. The testimony of the writer himself on the point will be produced when certain of the "Sonnets" fall under consideration. Exclusive of these passages in the "Sonnets" the "reasons" in question may be summed up as follows:

a. The large number of new words in the plays, estimated at five hundred, mostly from the Latin, and the much larger number of old words used in a new sense, estimated at five thousand, make it clear that these were written not merely by a genius but by a learned man—a man who read
Latin so continuously as that he came almost to think in that language. Then the similarity of Bacon's style to that of the plays, and above all the striking identity of the vocabulary in the prose works and plays, so marvelous that 98.5 per cent. of "Shakespeare's" words are also Bacon's [37:133], the use of the same metaphors and similes, of the same antitheta, etc. [37:136], makes it nearly certain (especially when it is borne in mind that that vocabulary, those metaphors, similes and antitheta are largely new) that the same mind produced both sets of books—the "Shakespearean" and Baconian.

b. Not only are there great numbers of new words and old words with new meanings, metaphors, similes, etc., common to the "Shakespeare" plays and to the Baconian prose, but the large number of phrases and turns of expression which are also found in both cannot possibly be attributed to accident. See these given by the hundred by Donnelly [74], by Wigston [197], by Holmes [99] and others.

c. Bacon and "Shakespeare" read the same books, and not only so, but the favorite books of the one were the favorite books of the other.

d. They write on the same subjects. The philosophy of the "De Augmentis," the "Novum Organum" and other prose works is constantly being reproduced in the plays; while Bacon's essays and the plays treat throughout the same subjects (human life and human passions) and always from the same point of view [197:25 et seq.]

e. On all sorts of subjects, large and small, their point of view is the same—they never express irreconcilable opinions.

f. They were (if two) the two greatest men living in the world at that time. For thirty years they lived in what we to-day should consider a small city of one hundred and sixty thousand inhabitants [82:820]. And it does not appear that they ever met, and there is no evidence that either of them ever knew of the existence of the other. The lesser man of the (supposed) two—Bacon—left behind him abundant evidence of the literary activity of his life in the form of manuscripts, letters to and from friends, etc. The greater—"Shakespeare"—left none; not a manuscript, not a letter.

g. The localities of the plays are all such as are known to have been known to Bacon either by residence, visiting or reading—largely the two former. With these localities the writer frequently evinces an intimate familiarity. The one especial locality which must have been minutely known to William Shakespeare—Stratford and its neighborhood—is not introduced.

h. There exists a distinct parallelism between the successive plays (their incidents, scenes, etc.) and the occurrences of Bacon's life (his position, cir-
cumstances, residences, etc.), while there seems none between them and "Shakespeare's" life, so far as this is known to us [130].

i. The relation existing between "Shakespeare's" "Richard III" and his "Henry the VIII" on the one hand and Bacon's prose history of Henry the VII on the other makes it about certain that the same man wrote the three works [197: 1–24].

j. It is sometimes said that Bacon was a scientist, a philosopher, a courtier, a lawyer, a man of affairs, but not a great wit or poet, such as might have written the plays. But, in the first place, and putting aside the plays, Bacon was both a wit and a poet. Macaulay does not exaggerate when he writes that, as shown in his prose works: "The poetical faculty was powerful in Bacon's mind, but not, like his wit, so powerful as occasionally to usurp the place of his reason and to tyrannize over the whole man." "No imagination," he adds, "was ever at once so strong and so thoroughly subjugated" [120: 487].

k. The "Promus" argument would alone seem, to an impartial mind, pretty conclusive of the Baconian authorship of the plays. If this collection [129] was not made to aid in the production of these, will some one kindly tell us with what end Bacon undertook and prosecuted the labor of its compilation? Those who have still doubts upon the subject would do well to read Bacon's openly acknowledged writings. Then, in the second place, it is claimed here that Bacon was really two men (the self conscious Bacon and the Cosmic Conscious Bacon); that the man seen by Bacon's contemporaries and in the prose works was the former, while the concealed man who produced the plays and "Sonnets" was the latter. The Cosmic Conscious Bacon had (of course) the use of all the learning and of all the faculties of the self conscious Bacon, and along with these the vast spiritual insight and powers which go with possession of Cosmic Consciousness.

l. About April 18th, 1621, after his fall, Bacon composed a prayer which Addison quoted as resembling the devotions of an angel rather than those of a man [175: 467]. No truer or higher poetry is found in the plays or "Sonnets" than is found in it. No man with a soul in his body can read it and doubt its absolute candor and honesty. In it he says: "I have (though in a despised weed) procured the good of all men." No one has ever explained what this "good of all men," which Bacon had procured and which went about in a despised dress, might be. Is there anything else it could be except the plays? "The good of all men" is such an immense phrase that the object referred to must necessarily be enormous. What other such object could there have been in Bacon's mind at the time? Well, his philo-
sophical works—the "De Augmentis" and the "Novum Organum" and the
rest? Yes, it would doubtless be true of them. But the object spoken of
was in a despised dress. Were they? Quite the contrary. They were in a
genuine, high-class, philosophic garb as to form and style—more, they were
in the best Latin that could, for love or money, he procured for them.

m. Bornmann [28] and Ruggles [145], in two fascinating volumes and
from somewhat different points of view, have ably pointed out (as indeed had
been done several times before but not so systematically) how persistently the
thought of Bacon and that of "Shakespeare" run in the same channel; how
the science and philosophy of the first are constantly worked into the poetry
of the second, becoming its very life blood and soul, and how the method
laid down and followed by the one is never lost sight of by the other. Indeed,
if nothing had ever been written on the subject except these two books
(and they do not touch the main, stock arguments) they would go far along
to a demonstration of the proposition that the man who wrote the "Tem-
est," "Lear" and "Merchant of Venice" wrote also the "De Augmentis"
and the "Silva Silvarium."

n. Finally, consider the anagram discovered by Dr. Platt, at that time of
New Jersey, in "Love's Labor's Lost" [51: 376]: "Beginning at the com-
 mencement of the fifth act, we meet one after another the following: Satis
quod sufficit (that which suffices is enough). Novi hominem tanquam te (I
know the man as well as I know you). Ne intelligis domine (do you under-
stand me, sir)? Laus Deo, bene, intelligo (praise God, I understand well).
Videsne quis venit (do you see who comes)? Video et Gaudeo (I see and
rejoice). Quare (wherefore)? Then, a few lines further on, the word Hon-
orificabilitudinitatibus is (as it were) flung into the text. Immediately after-
wards one says: 'Are you not lettered?' The answer is: 'Yes, he teaches
boys the hornbook.' 'What is a b spelt backward, with the horn on his head?'
The answer to that, of course, is 'Ba, with a horn added.' Now, 'Ba'
with a horn added is Bacornu, which is not, but suggests, and was probably
meant to suggest, Bacon. But whence is derived the a b which is to be spelt
backward? In the middle of the long word we find these letters in that
order—a b. Begin, now, at the b and spell backward as you are told. You
get bacifronoh. From these letters it is not hard to pick out Fr. Bacon.
Now take the other half of the word spelt forward—ilitudinitatibus. It is
not hard to pick out from it ludi (the plays), tuiti (protected or guarded),
nati (produced). These words, with those we had before, give us: Ludi
tuiti Fr. Bacono nati. The remaining letters are hiibs, which are easily
read as hi sibi. Now put the words together in grammatical order and you
have: Hi ludi, tuiti sibi, Fr. Bacono nati (these plays entrusted to themselves proceeded from Fr. Bacon). It is a perfect anagram. Each letter is used once and once only. The form of the long word is Latin and it is read in Latin. The sense of the infolded words correspond with the sense, so far as it has any [compare honorificare, honorifico; see Century Dictionary], of the infolding word. The infolded Latin is grammatical. The intention is fully declared and plain. There is no flaw.

"But where, now, does the long word come from, and can a connection be traced between it and the actual man, Francis Bacon? To answer this, turn back to the Northumberland House MS. mentioned above. That MS. belonged to Bacon, and could never have been seen by the actor, Shakespeare. On the outer leaf is written the word: Honorificabilitudino. This also is an anagram. It infolds the words: Initio hi ludi Fr. Bacono (in the beginning these plays from Fr. Bacon). It seems to have been a first thought. The Latin words do not form a complete sentence; they suggest a meaning, but do not actually contain one. The anagram in this form was not considered satisfactory, and was amended into the form found in ‘Love's Labor's Lost.'

"Thus we have before us the making of the word by Bacon. The sense of the word and its history correspond. The case seems to be complete."

o. But arguments such as above, though cogent and indeed of themselves sufficient if frankly considered, are no longer necessary to establish, although they may be allowed to suggest, the Baconian authorship of the plays and poems, since the writer within the last two years has discovered that these are all or nearly all signed by Francis Bacon, by means of a cipher invented by himself and kept to himself for forty odd years. The evidence upon which this statement rests, if not already published by the time this volume is issued, will very soon thereafter be given to the world.

VIII.

But the present volume has nothing to do with the Bacon-Shakespeare question except incidentally, by the way, and perforce. Somebody wrote the plays and "Sonnets," and that person, whoever he might be, had, it is believed, Cosmic Consciousness. And just as there is found in nearly all these cases two classes of writing—that, namely, which flows from the Cosmic Sense and that which, springing up in the self conscious mind, treats directly of the Cosmic Sense as an (to it) objective reality—so these two classes of writing are found here: (1) The plays, treating of the world of men and
flowing directly from the Cosmic Sense, and (2) the "Sonnets," treating (from the point of view of the self conscious man) in a subtle, hidden manner, as is usual and indeed inevitable, of the Cosmic Sense itself.

It remains (all that can be done here) to give as many of the "Sonnets" as there is space for, accompanied by the necessary explanatory remarks.

IX.

The first seventeen "Sonnets" urge the Cosmic Sense to produce. The theory is that they were written, as they stand, earliest, and that they were the first writings of their author after illumination. If it be thought singular that a man should so write, then compare this with an undoubted case of precisely the same thing as is here supposed. The 1855 edition of "Leaves of Grass" was written by Whitman immediately after illumination. On the third page of the "Leaves" (the preface was written afterwards) stand these words, addressed to the Cosmic Sense: "Loose the stop from your throat—not words, not music or rhyme I want; not custom or lecture, not even the best, only the lull I like, the hum of your valved voice." In the case of Whitman, as in the case of Buddha and Jesus, the special urge of the Cosmic Sense was towards an exalted life. In the case of Bacon, as in that of Balzac, it was especially towards literary expression. In accordance with this distinction, Whitman writes, in a long life, two small volumes; Bacon, in a shorter life, ten or twenty times as much. Whitman's invocation occupies three lines; Bacon's, two hundred lines.

SONNET I.

From fairest creatures we desire increase,
That thereby beauty's rose might never die,
But as the riper should by time decease,
His tender heir might bear his memory:
But thou contracted to thine own bright eyes,
Feed'st thy light's flame with self-substantial fuel,
Making a famine where abundance lies,
Thyself thy foe, to thy sweet self too cruel.
Thou that art now the world's fresh ornament,
And only* herald to the gaudy spring,
Within thy own bud buried thy content,
And, tender churl, mak'st waste in niggarding.

Pity the world, or else this glutton be,
To eat the world's due, by the grave and thee.

*Only—i. e., incomparable herald of the gaudy spring. In forty-three cases of Cosmic Consciousness the time of year of first illumination is known with more or less certainty in twenty, and in fifteen of these it took place in the first half of the year—January to June. Did perhaps Bacon's illumination take place in the spring? And is that the meaning of the line?

The fairest of all things is what Plotinus calls "this sublime condition," and of which Dante said: "Oh splendor of living light eternal! Who hath become so pallid under the shadow of Parnassus, or hath so drunk at its cistern, that he would not seem to have his mind encumbered, trying to represent thee as thou didst appear there where in harmony the heaven overshadows thee when in the open air thou didst thyself disclose." [71 : 201].
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Sonnet II.
When forty winters shall besiege thy brow,
And dig deep trenches in thy beauty's field,
Thy youth's proud livery, so gazed on now,
Will be a tattered weed, of small worth held:
Then being ask'd where all thy beauty lies,
Where all the treasure of thy lusty days,—
To say, within thine own deep sunken eyes,
Were an all-eating shame and thriftless praise.
How much more praise deserve'd thy beauty's use,
If thou could'st answer—"This fair child of mine
Shall sum my count, and make my old excuse,—"
Proving his beauty by succession thine!
This were to be new made when thou art old,
And see thy blood warm when thou feel'st it cold.

Sonnet III.
Look in thy glass, and tell the face thou viewest,
Now is the time that face should form another;
Whose fresh repair if not thou renewest,
Thou dost beguile the world, un bless some mother.*
For where is she so fair† whose unear'd womb
Disdains the tillage of thy husbandry?
Or who is he so fond will be the tomb
Of his self-love, to stop posterity?
Thou art thy mother's glass,‡ and she in thee
Calls back the lovely April of her prime:
So thou through windows of thine age shalt see,
Despite of wrinkles, this thy golden time.
But if thou live, remembered not to be,
Die single, and thine image dies with thee.

* Unbless some mother: deprive some art of the offspring it might (should) have had from the generative influence of the "lovely boy"—the Cosmic Sense.
† Where is she so fair? What art is there so fair, etc.
‡ Thou art thy mother's glass— that is, nature's mirror. "Hold the mirror up to nature" (Hamlet). In the Cosmic Sense all nature, including the human heart, is reflected. In this connection consider (besides the "Shakespeare" plays) the "Comédie Humaine" of Balzac; the "Divine Comedy" of Dante; the "Leaves of Grass" of Whitman.

Sonnet XV.
When I consider everything that grows
Holds in perfection but a little moment,
That this huge stage presenteth nought but shows,
Whereon the stars in secret influence comment;
When I perceive that men as plants increase,
Cheered and check'd even by the selfsame sky,
Vaunt in their youthful sap, at height decrease,
And wear their brave state out of memory;
Then the conceit of this inconstant stay
Sets you most rich in youth before my sight,
Where wasteful Time debateth with Decay,
To change your day of youth to sullied night;
And, all in war with Time, for love of you,
As he takes from you, I engrave you new.

All things, after a momentary period of maturity, fade and lapse. The Cosmic Sense itself is subject to the same universal law. In order that it may not die absolutely with the death of its possessor he (the self conscious Bacon) engraves it anew in the "Sonnets."
Francis Bacon

SONNET XVI.
But wherefore do not you a mightier way
Make war upon this bloody tyrant, Time?
And fortify yourself in your decay
With means more blessed than my barren rhyme?
Now stand you on the top of happy hours;
And many maiden gardens, yet unset,
With virtuous wish would bear your living flowers,
Much liker than your painted counterfeit:
So should the lines of life that life repair,
Which this, Time's pencil, or my pupil pen,
Neither in inward worth, or outward fair,
Can make you live yourself in eyes of men.
To give away yourself keeps yourself still;
And you must live drawn by your own sweet skill.

the lull I like,'" says Whitman, '"the hum of your valved voice."' If you would put yourself out, Bacon says to the Cosmic Sense, you would make yourself immortal. You would '"keep yourself still.'"

SONNET XVII.
Who will believe my verse in time to come,
If it were fill'd with your most high deserts?
Though yet, Heaven knows, it is but as a tomb
Which hides your life, and shows not half your parts.
If I could write the beauty of your eyes,
And in fresh numbers number all your graces,
The age to come would say, "this poet lies;
Such heavenly touches ne'er touch'd earthly faces."
So should my papers, yellow'd with their age,
Be scorn'd, like old men of less truth than tongue;
And your true rights be term'd a poet's rage,
And stretched metre of an antique song:
But were some child of yours alive that time,
You should live twice—in it, and in my rhyme.

SONNET XVIII.
Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date:
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often in his gold complexion dimm'd;
And every fair from fair sometimes declines,
By chance, or nature's changing course, untrimm'd;
But thy eternal summer shall not fade,
Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest;
Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou growest:
So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

He (the self conscious Bacon) will (he says) engraft the Cosmic Sense in the "Sonnets." But (he says to the Cosmic Sense) why do not you (yourself) adopt a mightier way to ensure your earthly immortality? You are now in your young prime, and many maiden gardens (art, poetry, the drama, etc.) would be glad to bear your children—your living flowers. And these would be much more like you than would a description of you made from without (as in the case of the "Sonnets"). For the "Sonnets" are a description of the Cosmic Sense from the point of view of self consciousness, whereas the really desirable thing was that the Cosmic Sense should itself speak. "Only let me say what I may (as in the "Sonnets") about you, no one could realize from my words what you really are. Let me tell how you appear to me, and it will be said I have exaggerated, lied. But produce—leave behind you children like yourself—worthy of yourself—as they must be—and you cannot be denied. You will live, unmistakably, twice: (1) In your own offspring, whose divinity none will be able to question, and (2) In my description of you, in the "Sonnets," which description will be seen, from a comparison with your own offspring, to be truthful.

The first part of the sonnet is a eulogy of the Cosmic Sense. It would seem that at the time this sonnet was composed Bacon had settled in his own mind how the Cosmic Sense was to express itself, and some of the work seems to have been done—that is, some of the plays written. He speaks of the Cosmic Sense as having grown to time in eternal lines.
Cosmic Consciousness

Sonnet XXXIII.

Full many a glorious morning have I seen
Flatter the mountain-tops with sovereign eye,
Kissing with golden face the meadows green,
Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy;
Anon permit the basest clouds to ride
With ugly rack on his celestial face,
And from the forlorn world his visage hide,
Stealing unseen to west with this disgrace:
Even so my son one early morn did shine
With all triumphant splendor on my brow;
But, out alack! he was but one hour mine,
The region cloud hath mask'd him from me now.
Yet him for this my love no whit disdaineth;
Suns of the world may stain, when heaven's sun
staineth.

Sonnet XXXIII refers to the intermittent character of illumination, which holds true in all cases of Cosmic Consciousness, in which there is more than one flash of the divine radiance. It treats of the cheerlessness and barrenness of the intervals as compared with those periods when the Cosmic Sense is actually present. So Behmen, referring to the intermittent character of his illumination, says [40:16]: “The sun shone on me a good while but not constantly, for the sun hid itself, and then I knew not nor well understood my own labor” (his own writings). Note the use of the same figure by both writers. So also Yepes tells us: “When these visions occur, it is as if a door were opened into a most marvellous light, whereby the soul sees, as men do when the lightning flashes in a dark night. The lightning makes surrounding objects visible for an instant, and then leaves them in darkness, though the forms of them remain in the fancy. But in the case of the soul the vision is much more perfect; for those things it saw in spirit in that light are so impressed upon it, that whenever God enlightens it again, it beholds them as distinctly as it did at first, precisely as in a mirror, in which we see objects reflected whenever we look upon it. These visions once granted to the soul never afterward leave it altogether; for the forms remain, though they become somewhat indistinct in the course of time. The effects of these visions in the soul are quietness, enlightenment, joy-like glory, sweetness, pureness, love, humility, inclination or elevation of the mind to God, sometimes more, sometimes less, sometimes more of one, sometimes more of another, according to the disposition of the soul and the will of God” [203:200-1]. With the last words of Yepes compare Paul: “The fruit of the spirit [Christ, the Cosmic Sense] is love, joy, peace, long suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance” [22:5:22].

Sonnet XXXVI.

Let me confess that we two must be twain,
Although our undivided loves are one:
So shall those blot that do with me remain,
Without thy help, by me be borne alone.
In our two loves there is but one respect,
Though in our lives a separate spite,
Which though it alter not love’s sole effect,
Yet doth it steal sweet hours from love’s delight.
I may not evermore acknowledge thee,
Lest my bewailed guilt should do thee shame;
Nor thou with public kindness honor me,
Unless thou take that honor from thy name:
But do not so; I love thee in such sort
As, thou being mine, mine is thy good report.

It is reasonable to suppose that this sonnet represents a later date than those above quoted. It is fair to imagine, therefore, that when it was written quite a body of the plays was in existence. For some years Bacon has been leading a dual life: on the one hand the life of a lawyer, courier, politician—his self conscious life: on the other the life of the seer, poet—the life lit by that "light rare, untellable, lighting the very light"—the "light that never was on land or sea"—the life, in a word, of Cosmic Consciousness. He had kept these two lives entirely apart. None or few (Anthony, perhaps, and Mathews) knew that he was living any other life than the first. It had for many strong reasons, and feelings stronger than reasons, become with him a settled policy that the two lives were to be kept apart. The frank duality of this and some other of the "Sonnets" will be almost or quite incomprehensible to many as applied to two parts of the same person or two personalities in the same individual. But we know that (supposing the interpretation here adopted to be correct) the language of the "Sonnets" is not more extreme in this respect than is language in other of these cases in which there can be no doubt as to its meaning.
Thus Whitman writes: "With laugh and many a kiss O soul thou pleasest me, I thee" [193 : 321]. And again: "I, turning, call to thee O soul, thou actual me" [ib].

The writer of the sonnet says, or seems to say, that should he acknowledge his other self, the Cosmic Sense, and its offspring, the plays, any good that could do him (the self conscious person) would be taken from this higher self, and that he will not consent to.

SONNET XXXIX.

O, how thy worth with manners may I sing,
When thou art all the better part of me?
What can mine own praise to mine own self bring?
And what is't but mine own, when I praise thee?
Even for this let us divided live,
And our dear love lose name of single one,
That by this separation I may give
That due to thee which thou deserv'd alone.

O absence, what a torment wouldst thou prove,
Were it not thy sour leisure gave sweet leave
To entertain the time with thoughts of love,—
Which time and thoughts so sweetly doth deceive,—
And that thou teachest how to make one twain,
By praising him here, who doth hence remain!

it. The most striking expression in this sonnet is: "Thou [the Cosmic Sense] teachest how to make one twain." This is, as pointed out many times in this volume, a prime characteristic of the cases in question. "The attainment of Arahathship" (Cosmic Consciousness), says Gautama, will cause a man, "being one, to become multiform" [161 : 214]. "I live," says Paul, "yet no longer I but Christ [the Cosmic Sense] livest in me" [22 : 2 : 20]. And again: "If any man be in Christ [if any man live the life of the Cosmic Sense] he is a new creature" [21 : 5 : 17]; and Paul says that the man Jesus "made both [that is, (1) the Cosmic Sense—Christ, and (2) the self conscious man—Jesus] one," . . . "that he might create of the twain one new man" [25 : 2 : 14-15], and in many other places he bears testimony to his own dual personality. Mohammed called the Cosmic Sense "Gabriel;" the Koran was dictated by him (or it); the ostensible Mohammed was a second individuality. Balzac, speaking of Louis Lambert (i.e., himself), after giving his life down to the period of illumination, says: "The events I have still to relate form the second existence of this creature destined to be exceptional in all things" [5 : 100]. He then goes on to describe the oncoming of the Cosmic Conscious condition, and, in the aphorisms, Cosmic Consciousness itself. Whitman constantly refers to the Cosmic Sense as his soul, and calls the every day, visible, Walt Whitman, "The other I am" [193 : 32], and so on.

SONNET LII

So am I as the rich, whose blessed key
Can bring him to his sweet up-locked treasure,
The which he will not every hour survey,
For blunting the fine point of seldom pleasure.
Therefore are feasts so solemn and so rare,
Since, seldom coming, in the long year set,
Like stones of worth they thinly placed are,
Or captain jewels in the carkanet.
So is the time that keeps you, as my chest,
Or as the wardrobe which the robe doth hide,
To make some special instant special blest,
By new unfolding his imprison'd pride.

Blessed are you whose worthiness gives scope,
Being had to triumph, being lack'd to hope.

The meaning of this sonnet seems unmistakable. It scarcely needs a commentary. The author says that the Cosmic Sense is the best part of him (as, of course, it was), and being part of himself, it is scarcely mannerly in him to praise it. But (he says) for this very reason let us live as two. His absence from the Cosmic Sense is, of course, the time he is occupied with law, politics, business, worldly affairs—all that time, in fact, between the periods of illumination, when his time and mind were not occupied with the things of the Cosmic Sense. That absence is made happy by the knowledge that at any time he can turn to thoughts of the Cosmic Sense and of the things belonging to

Compare Plotinus: "This sublime condition is not of permanent duration. It is only now and then that we can enjoy the elevation (mercifully made possible for us) above the limits of the body and the world. I myself have realized it but three times as yet" [188 : 81]. Bacon's periods of illumination were probably longer and more frequent than those of Plotinus. Neither Plotinus nor Bacon, apparently, could control the periods of illumination. It seems likely that Jesus refers to this apparently causeless and arbitrary coming and going of the divine light when he said [17 : 3 : 8]: "The wind bloweth
where it listest and thou hearest the voice thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the spirit."

SONNET LIII.

What is your substance, whereof are you made,
That millions of strange shadows on you tend?
Since every one hath, every one, one shade,
And you, but one, can every shadow lend.
Describe Adonis, and the counterfeit
Is poorly imitated after you;
On Helen's cheek all art of beauty set,
And you in Grecian tires are painted new:
Speak of the spring, and foison of the year;
The one doth shadow of your beauty show,
The other as your bounty doth appear;
And you in every blessed shape we know.
In all external grace you have some part,
But you like none, none you, for constant heart.

A description, from one point of view, of Cosmic Consciousness. Compare with it a description by Gautama from the same point of view. He says: "Arahasthip [Cosmic Consciousness] enables a man to comprehend by his own heart the hearts of other beings and of other men, to understand all minds, the passionate, the calm, the angry, the peaceable, the deluded, the wise, the concentrated, the ever varying, the lofty, the narrow, the sublime, the mean, the steadfast, the wavering, the free, and the enslaved" [161: 215]. That is, it reveals all character, as is so well exemplified in the "Shakespeare" drama. Compare Dante's world-wide vision; Balzac's insight into the structure and operation of the infinite human heart; Whitman's "I am of old and of young, of the foolish as much as the wise, regardless of others, ever regardful of others, maternal as well as paternal, a child as well as a man," etc, [193 : 42], and the almost universal knowledge of man and his environment which his writings, especially the "Leaves," indicate.

SONNET LV.

Not marble, nor the gilded monuments
Of princes, shall outlive this powerful rhyme;
But you shall shine more bright in these contents
Than unswept stone, besmeared with sluttish time.
When wasteful war shall statues overturn,
And broils root out the work of masonry,
Nor Mars his sword nor war's quick fire shall burn
The living record of your memory.
'Gainst death and all oblivious enmity
Shall you pace forth; your praise shall still find room,
Even in the eyes of all posterity
That wear this world out to the ending doom.
So, till the judgment that yourself arise,
You live in this, and dwell in lovers' eyes.

By "this powerful rhyme," in which the Cosmic Sense shall endure and shine in the far future, is probably not intended the "Sonnets" but the plays or some particular play, such as "Romeo and Juliet," written 1596, printed 1597 and 1599. Until the judgment brought to birth by the elevation of human taste by the plays themselves, you (Cosmic Consciousness) shall live in this play and delight the eyes and hearts of lovers.

SONNET LIX.

If there be nothing new, but that which is
Hath been before, how are our brains beguil'd,
Which, laboring for invention, bears amiss
The second burden of a former child!
O that record could with a backward look,
Even of five hundred courses of the sun,
Show me your image in some antique book,
Since mind at first in character was done!
That I might see what the old world could say

The writer asks: "Is this illumination of which I am conscious a new phenomenon or did it exist in the old world? I wish," he says, "I could find it or a description of it in literature. If it has existed it ought to be found in the records of the human mind, and if I could find such records I could judge whether the human mind was advancing, retreating, or standing still." He seems to reach
To this composed wonder of your frame;
Whether we are mended, or whether better they,
Or whether revolution be the same.
O, sure I am, the wits of former days
To subjects worse have given admiring praise.

experitence to that of the sacred writers. It does not seem that he knew much of Dante; and the
Buddhistic literature, in which it is fully treated, was an absolutely sealed book to Englishmen of his
time. It would never have occurred to him to examine the Koran and the life of Mohammed, if, in-
deed, they were accessible to him. Bacon was thus probably entirely cut off from any knowledge of
other cases than his own.

SONNET LXII.

Sin of self-love possesses all mine eye,
And all my soul, and all my every part;
And for this sin there is no remedy,
It is so grounded inward in my heart.
Methinks no face so gracious is as mine,
No shape so true, no truth of such account;
And for myself my own worth do define,
As I all other in all worth surmount.
But when my glass shows me myself indeed,
Beated and chopp'd with tann'd antiquity,
Mine own self-love quite contrary I read;
Self so self-loving were iniquity.

'Tis thee (myself) that for myself I praise,
Painting my age with beauty of thy days.

In this sonnet the duality of the person writing is brought out very strongly—no doubt purposely. When
he dwells on his Cosmic Conscious self he is, as it were, lost in admiration of himself. When he turns to
the physical and self conscious self he is inclined, on the contrary, to despise himself. He is at the same
time very much and very little of an egotist. Those who knew the man
Walt Whitman know that this same
seeming contradiction, resting on the same foundation, existed most mark-
edly in him. Whitman’s admiration
for the Cosmic Conscious Whitman
and his works (the “Leaves”) was
just such as pictured in this sonnet,
while he was absolutely devoid of egotism in the ordinary way of the self conscious individual. It is
believed that the above remarks would remain true if applied to Paul, Mohammed or Balzac. Re-
duced to last analysis, the matter seems to stand about as follows: The Cosmic Conscious self, from
all points of view, appears superb, divine. From the point of view of the Cosmic Conscious self, the
body and the self conscious self appear equally divine. But from the point of view of the ordinary
self consciousness, and so compared with the Cosmic Conscious self, the self conscious self and the
body seem insignificant and even, as well shown in Paul’s case, contemptible.

SONNET LXX.

That thou art blam’d shall not be thy defect,
For slander’s mark was ever yet the fair;
The ornament of beauty, no
A crow that flies in heaven’s sweetest air.
So thou be good, slander doth but approve
Thy worth the greater, being wo’d of time;
For canker vice the sweetest buds doth love,
And thou present’st a pure unstained prime.
Thou hast pass’d by the ambush of young days,
Either not assail’d, or victor being charg’d;
Yet this thy praise cannot be so thy praise,
To tie up envy, evermore enlarg’d:

If some suspect of ill mask’d not thy show,
Then thou alone kingdoms of hearts shouldst owe.

Bacon says: That a Cosmic Sense
(as seen in its offspring, the plays)
should be blamed (as for license in language, contempt of received rules,
etc.) shall be no proof of defect.
Great original work, such as the
“Shakespeare” drama, is never ap-
preciated at first, is, in fact, always
the object of grave suspicion and
often of absolute condemnation. If,
he says, the Cosmic Sense is really
the divine thing it seems to be, evil
speaking of it and its offspring only
proves it the more divine, as showing
it is over the heads and above the
judgment of ordinary men. If it was
not for this inevitable blindness all
eyes and hearts would recognize and
bow down before its supremacy.
Cosmic Consciousness

SONNET LXXXVIII.

So oft have I invok’d thee for my Muse, 
And found such fair assistance in my verse, 
As every alien pen hath got my use, 
And under thee their poesy disperse.

Thine eyes, that taught the dumb on high to sing, 
And heavy ignorance aloft to fly, 
Have added feathers to the learned’s wing, 
And given grace a double majesty.

Yet be most proud of that which I compile, 
Whose influence is thine, and born of thee: 
In others’ works thou dost but mend the style, 
And arts with thy sweet graces graced be;

But thou art all my art, and dost advance 
As high as learning my rude ignorance.

and utilized by the verse writers of the day; has added feathers to their wings, and given a double majesty to the grace of their lines. So Lang says of Scott that he “was being driven from post to post by his imitators, whom he had taught, like Captain Bobadil, to write nearly as well as himself” [169:9]. But he says to the Cosmic Sense, be most proud of what I produce, for the merits of that come not all from study, cleverness or practice, but entirely from yourself.

Compare with the above statement the cases of Jesus, Paul, Mohammed, Balzac and Walt Whitman, who either had no practice or training, or (as in the case of Balzac) derived little or no benefit therefrom, but who in middle life, began immediately upon illumination, either to speak or to write undying words.

SONNET LXXXVI.

Was it the proud full sail of his great verse, 
Bound for the prize of all-too-precious you, 
That did my ripe thoughts in my brain inhere, 
Making their tomb the womb wherein they grew?

Was it his spirit, by spirits taught to write 
Above a mortal pitch, that struck me dead?
No, neither he, nor his compeers by night 
Giving him aid, my verse astonished.

He, nor that affable familiar ghost 
Which nightly gulls him with intelligence, 
As victors, of my silence cannot boast;
I was not sick of any fear from thence:

But when your countenance fill’d up his line 
Then lack’d I matter; that enfeebled mine.

At the time this sonnet was written many of the plays were composed, published, and doubtless imitated. The writer speaks of himself as “ignorant” because he has had no training or practice in verse writing. The Cosmic Sense had immediately upon its appearance “taught the hitherto dumb” man “on high to sing.” Becoming illumined at about the age of thirty, he not only began without any apprenticeship to write poetry, but to write a new and higher poetry than had hitherto been written in English. And he says that the divine light shining through his compositions (the plays) has been (to some extent, at all events) absorbed

and utilized by the verse writers of the day; has added feathers to their wings, and given a double majesty to the grace of their lines. So Lang says of Scott that he “was being driven from post to post by his imitators, whom he had taught, like Captain Bobadil, to write nearly as well as himself” [169:9]. But he says to the Cosmic Sense, be most proud of what I produce, for the merits of that come not all from study, cleverness or practice, but entirely from yourself.

Compare with the above statement the cases of Jesus, Paul, Mohammed, Balzac and Walt Whitman, who either had no practice or training, or (as in the case of Balzac) derived little or no benefit therefrom, but who in middle life, began immediately upon illumination, either to speak or to write undying words.

In this sonnet reduplication of the individual, Bacon - Shakespeare, is carried to the farthest pitch. We are forcibly reminded (once more) of Gautama’s words in this connection, viz., that Cosmic Consciousness (or Arahatship, as he calls it, “will make a man, being one, to become multi-form”—not merely two, but multi-form. Few or no sonnets (it would seem) have been written for some time by the “other I am.” But the Cosmic Conscious personality had been producing rapidly. Several or many plays had been written within a brief period. The Cosmic Conscious Bacon had been taught by the Cosmic Sense to write “above a mortal pitch.” It was not that, however, which struck dumb the self conscious Bacon. But it was the fact that the Cosmic Conscious individual had absorbed (for the time at least) into himself all the forces of the complex organism. As to the “compeers” of the Cosmic Sense, they are the spiritual entities spoken of by Balzac. “Mysterious beings armed with wondrous faculties, who combine with other beings and penetrate them as active agents, beings which overpower others with the scepter and glory of a superior nature” [7:50]. Then in line nine “He” is the Cosmic Conscious Bacon, while the “affable familiar ghost” is Cosmic Consciousness. The expression, “Nightly gulls him with intelligence,” may be compared with Whitman’s “Message from the heavens whispering to me even in sleep” [193:324]. It may be noted here (most readers will observe it for themselves) that when speaking of the same experience Whitman’s language is more moderate, lower toned, than Balzac’s, Dante’s or perhaps any other of the Cosmic Conscious writers.
SONNET XCV.

How sweet and lovely dost thou make the shame,
Which, like a canker in the fragrant rose,
Doth spot the beauty of thy budding name!
O, in what sweets dost thou thy sins enclose!
That tongue that tells the story of thy days,
Making lascivious comments on thy sport,
Cannot dispraise but in a kind of praise;
Naming thy name blesses an ill report.
O, what a mansion have those vices got
Which for their habitation chose out thee,
Where beauty's veil doth cover every blot,
And all things turn to fair that eyes can see!
Take heed, dear heart, of this large privilege;
The hardest knife ill-us'd doth lose his edge.

he told the writer [38:26]: "When 'Leaves of Grass,' in 1855, roused such a tempest of anger and condemnation, I went off to the east end of Long Island and spent the late summer and all the fall—the happiest of my life—around Shelter Island and Peconic Bay. Then came back to New York with the confirmed resolution, from which I never afterwards wavered, to go on with my poetic enterprise in my own way and finish it as well as I could." A corresponding incident in Balzac's life occurred in connection with the publication of "Le Médecin de Campagne." In 1833 (shortly after illumination) he wrote to his much loved sister that that book would reach her next week: "It has cost me," he said, "ten times the work 'Louis Lambert' did." That labor was frightful, I may now die in peace; I have done a great work for my country." Two months afterwards he writes again: "Do you know how 'Le Médecin' has been received? By a torrent of insults;... but I have chosen my path; nothing shall discourage me... Never has the torrent which bears me onward been so rapid; no more terribly majestic work has ever compelled the human brain" [4:142-3]. Line four, ("O in what sweets," etc.) refers to the vices, crimes, meannesses in the plays (the acts of Regan, Goneril, Edmund, Iago, etc.). And does not a veil of beauty cover them all? That tongue, he says, that tells the visions, the revelations, which proceed from the Cosmic Sense, "Cannot dispraise but in a kind of praise." ("And I say," says Whitman, "that there is in fact no evil") [193:22]. Then he cautions the Cosmic Sense to take "heed of this large privilege." And so we see Whitman "returning upon [his] poems, considering, lingering long," and striking out words and expressions that seem to him too free. This sonnet is one of the most difficult to fully enter into the meaning of, but when this is realized it is perhaps the most exquisite passage ever written by its author. The most exquisite in expression and in metaphysical sublety. No comment, perhaps, certainly no comment by the present editor, can do it even the most meager justice.

SONNET XCVI.

Some say, thy fault is youth, some wantonness;
Some say, thy grace is youth and gentle sport;
Both grace and faults are lov'd of more and less;
Thou mak'st faults graces that to thee resort.
As on the finger of a throned queen
The basest jewel will be well esteem'd,
So are those errors that in thee are seen
To truths translated, and for true things deem'd.
How many lambs might the stern wolf betray,
If like a lamb he could his looks translate!
How many gazers might'st thou lead away,
If thou would'st use the strength of all thy state!
But do not so; I love thee in such sort,
As thou being mine, mine is thy good report.

"How sweet and lovely dost thou make the shame," Helen Price says that in 1866 Walt Whitman (who wanted a publisher for "Leaves of Grass") badly enough at that time) was offered by a prominent house good terms on condition that he would consent to the deletion of a few lines of "Children of Adam." An hour or two after the offer was made he returned to her mother's house in New York, where he was then staying, and, after telling her and her mother of the offer, said: "But I dare not do it, I dare not leave out or alter what is so genuine, so indis-pensable, so lofty, so pure" [38:32]. So, as to an earlier episode in his life, the plays (the offspring of the Cosmic Sense) are variously judged. What, for instance, seems "wantonness" to one to another is "gentle sport." Both faults and graces are commended; for faults are made graces by the alchemy of the Cosmic Sense. "I am myself," says Whitman, "just as much evil as good, and my nation is, and I say there is in fact no evil" [193:22]. And Paul says: "I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus [that is, by the Cosmic Sense] that nothing is un-clean of itself." As a base jewel on the hand of a queen passes for a rich gem, so all things in you (the Cosmic
Cosmic Consciousness

Sense) are beautiful, true and good. If you should give free expression to this revelation ("using the strength of all your state") you would lead many astray (for they would misunderstand you), and you yourself (in your progeny—such as Paul's Epistles, the "Shakespeare" drama, the "Leaves of Grass," etc.) would be condemned and would be so hindered doing your proper work in the world, therefore "do not so."

SONNET XCVII.

How like a winter hath my absence been
From thee, the pleasure of the fleeting year!
What freezings have I felt, what dark days seen!
What old December's bareness everywhere!
And yet this time removed was summer's time;
The teeming autumn, big with rich increase,
Bearing the wanton burden of the prime,
Like widow'd wombs after their lord's decease:
Yet this abundant issue seem'd to me
But hope of orphans, and unfather'd fruit;
For summer and his pleasures wait on thee,
And, thou away, the very birds are mute;
Or if they sing, 'tis with so dull a cheer,
That leaves look pale, dreading the winter's near.

Cosmic Sense as himself, and of the self-conscious Whitman says, it was a period of very free production—as there is no reason it should not have been—for what is revealed by the Cosmic Sense remains clear and manifest even for months and years, supposing there should be no subsequent illumination. Compare Yepes, as quoted in comment on Sonnet XXXIII. But though a period of sufficient (reflected) light and of free production, it was joyless and bare as compared with periods during which the Cosmic Sense was actually present.

SONNET CXXVI.

O thou my lovely boy, who in thy power
Dost hold Time's fickle glass, his sickle, hour;
Who hast by waning grown, and therein show'st
Thy lovers withering, as thy sweet self grow'st;
If Nature, sovereign mistress over wrack,
As thou goest onwards, still will pluck thee back,
She keeps thee to this purpose, that her skill
May time disgrace, and wretched minutes kill.
Yet fear her, O thou minion of her pleasure!
She may detain, but not still keep, her treasure:
Her audit, though delay'd, answer'd must be,
And her quietus is to render thee.

This sonnet constitutes the close of the address to Cosmic Consciousness. It was probably written very shortly before publication (1609), after the writer had been "illumined with the Brahmic Splendor" [155: 232] nearly twenty years and had produced, under its influence, nearly the whole "Shakespeare" drama. O lovely boy, he says, addressing for the last time the Cosmic Sense, who in the hollow of thy hand doth hold time and death—who waning (as age advances within me) has grown (in the plays, thy products), and thereby showest thyself constantly augmenting as thy mortal lovers wither and die. If Nature should desire (as her way is) to destroy thee (the plays—children of Cosmic Consciousness) she yet will not, but will keep thee to show that she is able to disgrace time by making what he cannot kill. Not only so, but also to show that this product of Nature can even kill time (destroy wretched minutes). Yet do thou (Nature's favorite—the Cosmic Sense—the plays) still fear Nature, who may keep thee for a time, but perhaps not forever. As to her (Nature), though her rule is so strong, she must one day give an account of herself to a stronger power. That power is thee (Cosmic Consciousness), whom when evolution (which is Nature) has produced (that is, made general—as self-consciousness is to-day), she (Nature) will have received her quietus. For the full apparition of the Cosmic Sense will destroy death, the fear of death, sin and
space. "Then cometh the end, when he [Christ—Cosmic Consciousness] shall deliver up the kingdom to God even the Father, when he shall have abolished all rule, and all authority and power. For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be abolished is death" [20: 15: 24–26]. For Cosmic Consciousness will throw the things of sense (of self consciousness—of Nature, as we know her to-day, which now absorb men's thoughts) so into the background as practically to abolish them. Nature, instead of being the Lord, as now, will be a slave—will effectually, in fact, receive her quietus.

SUMMARY.

In this case the ordinary details of proof of illumination are largely wanting. If William Shakespeare wrote the plays and "Sonnets," we have absolutely no external evidence to build upon. If Francis Bacon wrote them, we have the vague evidence of his seclusion at about the time his illumination (if at all) must have taken place, and Hawley's and his own seeming allusion to the possession by him of some such unusual, very exalted, faculty. Over and above these circumstances, which to most will seem very slight, the argument that the man who wrote the plays and "Sonnets" had Cosmic Consciousness must rest upon these writings themselves and would consist of two clauses. (1) The creator of the plays was perhaps the greatest intellect the world has seen. His moral intuitions were as true as his intellect was great. He was from all points of view a transcendentally great spiritual force. Being so, he ought (according to the thesis maintained in this volume) to have had Cosmic Consciousness. (2) The first one hundred and twenty-six sonnets seem to show beyond doubt that their author had the Cosmic Sense and that these sonnets were addressed to it. It does not seem to the present writer that they can be made sense of (intelligently read) from any other standpoint.

CHAPTER 10.

*Jacob Behmen* (called The Teutonic Theosopher).

Born 1575; died 1624.

His birthplace was at Alt Seidenberg, a place about two miles distant from Görlitz, in Germany. He came of a well-to-do family, but his first employment was that of a herd-boy on the Lands-Krone, a hill in the neighborhood of Görlitz. The only education he received was at the town school of Seidenberg, a mile from his home. Later he was apprenticed to a shoemaker in Seidenberg. By the year 1599 he was settled at Görlitz as a master shoemaker and married to Katharina, a daughter of Hans Kuntzschmann, a thriving butcher in that town.