

# **THE GREAT SECRET**

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The great secret by Maurice Maeterlinck & Bernard Miall

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**MAURICE MAETERLINCK & BERNARD MIALI**

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GREAT SECRET**



# The Great Secret

BY

MAURICE MAETERLINCK

*Translated by*

BERNARD MIALL



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## CHAPTER I

### PROLOGUE

#### I

DO not look to find in this volume a history of occultism, or a methodical monograph on the subject. To such a work one would need to devote whole volumes, which would of necessity be filled with a great measure of that very rubbish which I wish above all to spare the reader. I have no other aim than to tell as simply as possible what I have learned in the course of some years that were spent in these rather discredited and unfrequented regions.

I bring thence the impressions of a candid traveler who has traversed them rather as one seeking to observe than as a believer. These pages contain, if you will, a kind of summary, a provisional stock-taking. I know nothing that may not be learned by the first comer who will travel the same road. I am not an initiate; I have sat at the feet of no mysterious and evanescent masters, coming from the ends of the

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earth, or from another world, expressly to reveal to me the ultimate verities and to forbid me to repeat them. I have had no access to those secret libraries, to those hidden sources of the supreme wisdom which, it seems, are somewhere to be found but will always be for us as though they were not, since those who win through to them are condemned, on pain of death, to an inviolable silence. Neither have I deciphered any incomprehensible books of magic, nor found a new key to the sacred books of the great religions. I have but read and studied most of what has been written of these matters, and amidst an enormous mass of documents, absurd, puerile, tedious, and useless, I have given my attention to those works of outstanding value which are really able to teach us something that we do not find elsewhere. In thus clearing the approaches to an inquiry that is only too often encumbered by a wearisome amount of rubbish, I shall perhaps facilitate the task of those who may wish, and be able, to go farther than I have traveled.

### 2

Thanks to the labors of a science which is comparatively recent, and more especially to the researches of the students of Hindu and Egyptian antiquities, it is very much easier today than it was not so long ago to discover the