CHAPTER V

Marie Corelli's Theory of Twin-Souls.

"Those whom God hath joined together, let no man put asunder."

Man is an amalgam of spirit and matter. His soul is the spark of God. Love is the essential power of God. It plays the part of mediator between God and His creation. "Love is that power which clasps the things of eternity and makes them all its own." Love is the cause of creation. God created the world in His cosmic play. The creation breathes the spirit of love. Love is "the primal mover of all things." It is the descending and ascending spirit of Heaven and Earth. It is the harmonising power of the Universe. Therefore an Angel says to the heroine of The Life Everlasting: "In Life's great choral symphony ... the keynote of the dominant melody is Love! ...

Love! - the one vibrant tone to which the whole universe moves in tune, - Love, the breath of God, the pulsation of His Being, the glory of His work, the fulfilment of His Eternal joy, - Love, and Love along, is the web and texture and garment of happy Immortality."

The human soul through its guiding power

2. The Life Everlasting, p. 74.
3. Ardath, p. 443.
of love finds its salvation. Love is the uniting power of God. Love in its essence is not a transitory disposition but is a fundamental principle of the universe. It pulsates in all things of the universe. "Love is not an Emotion but a principle and as the generator of Life pervades all things, and is all things." It is the emblem of eternity and every soul possesses it.

Two kinds of love are generated in man, - love physical and spiritual. All human beings possess love in different degrees. Physical love is the natural instinct seen in all animals and it is satisfied by the gratification of sex. It is the love of the flesh and it is based on the difference of sex. This magnetic attraction between man and woman is the promoter of their union and their progeny. It is a mutual attraction. The nature of love between two persons of opposite sex is defined as follows: "That disposition or state of feeling with regard to a person which arising from recognition of attractive qualities, from instincts of natural relationship, or from sympathy manifests itself in solitude for the welfare of the object and usually also in delight in his presence and desire for his approval." Plato refers to this natural instinct in man and women in Phaedrus as "the irrational desire."

1. The Life Everlasting, pp. 410.
It is impulsive and sometimes even volcanic. The love of physical beauty is inconstant because the body is perishable. But the common man does not think of love as anything beyond the craving of flesh and earthly luxuries. He is satisfied with material comforts and with his progeny. He is not contemplative. His conception of the life after death is even primitive. He thinks that his offspring will preserve his memory and give him the blessedness of immortality. But the soul in man cannot be content with the pleasures of the flesh. The men whose souls are made domineering by their love of material prosperity, are blind to the higher purpose in life. Man has to transcend his love of physical beauty and experience the ethereal and supreme love of the Divine.

Spiritual love is divine love. Spiritual love originates in the soul. It is of the ideal. It is constant and real. A man's true love for an object is not based on the physical appearance of that object but is rooted in the spiritual reality of that object, which he observes with the eye of his soul. The object serves mainly as an instrument for this higher experience. Proceeding from an imaginative perception of the beauty of an object, man contemplates the beauty of the absolute. Love and faith become one. When man apprehends Absolute Beauty through the power of love, he realises the insignificance of the pomp and pleasure of the earth. His soul burns
to be in communion with that supreme Beauty. Love becomes the energising power of the soul throughout its evolution for the attainment of its immortality and eternity in God. Love and Life are the eternal principles of existence. Death is an event experienced by embodied souls. It is related to matter but not to pure spirit. As Kremlin says in *The Soul of Lilith*: "Love is stronger than Death." It is the greatest divine Force working in the Universe.

Love dominates the life of human beings. As S.T. Coleridge says in his poem on "Love":

"All thoughts, all passions, all delights,
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
All are but ministers of Love,
And feed his sacred flame."

All the feelings of man, whether good or bad, pleasant or unpleasant, seem to rise from love. Even hatred and jealousy are due to disappointed love. Man's dual nature has made his love more complex and mysterious. Corelli, like Coleridge, believes in the overwhelming power of Love: "The mystery of love, in which all other passions centre and have power." Corelli's life itself was a study in love. She was tossed to and fro on

2. *Ardath*, pp.163.
its stormy waves. The doctrine of twin-souls was a conviction with her. She remained unmarried throughout her life, waiting for her destined other half. She was convinced of the eventual union of the destined twin-souls in one world or the other of the universe.

Marie Corelli's doctrine of twin-souls is the principle of love as it obtains between two persons—man and woman who are kindred spirits. This doctrine is a secondary theme in many of her novels. Love throws a magic spell on youths. Men and women choose their mates and get married. But all marriages are not successful. Why is this? Is it merely due to diverse social and cultural conditions or is there in it the hand of an unknown power working behind the destinies of men and women? Some persons live and die as bachelors or spinsters. How to explain this? Is marriage a social contract or a heavenly grace? Do those who lead a single life get their life-companion in the other world if not in this one? Do the twin-souls live united in Heaven? Corelli has considered these problems of life and love and has expressed her opinions regarding these in her novels. In her doctrine of twin-souls she is influenced by theosophical works and by the dialogues of Plato. She calls twin-souls by different names,—'twin-flames', 'dual flames', 'companion spirits', 'exact counterparts' and 'two halves'. 
True marriage is primarily the union of souls. Love based on spiritual perception is noble and constant. The union of twin-souls is God's ordinance and it is bound to be effected in course of time. Human laws and conventions cannot obstruct it. The monk Heliobas remarks regarding the dual nature of the human soul in *A Romance of Two Worlds*: "There is no soul on this earth that is complete, alone. Like everything else it is dual. It is like half a flame that seeks the other half and is dissatisfied and restless till it attains its object." The souls wander from one place to another in search of their counterparts. They transmigrate and wait for each other till they come together. Being immortal, they are not handicapped by death. In *The Soul of Lilith*, El-Rami and Lilith are the destined twin-souls. But El-Rami was a sceptic. He had no faith in spiritual love and in the union of twin-souls. He loved Lilith's beautiful body and did not explore and understand the nature of her soul. The dissatisfied soul of Lilith is like a wandering angel, waiting always for the arrival of her twin-soul. "She is a lonely creature, - a wandering angel, for ever waiting, - for ever hoping. Unloved, save by the Highest Love, she wends her flight from star to star, from world to world, - a spirit beautiful, but incomplete as a flower without its stem, - a bird without its mate." But she cannot remain forever alone.

1. A Romance of Two Worlds, p. 132.
2. The Soul of Lilith, p. 163.
Love fulfills her desire by attracting to her her twin-flame —
'the crown and completion of her being and by bringing it near
to her soul when 'the hours ripen to their best fulfilment'.

"Thus are the destinies of human lives woven and interwoven.

...From infinite and endless points of light they grow and
part and mingle together, till the destined two are one". ¹

The twin-souls are often distracted by the influence of other
souls. They meet each other and even pass unrecognized.

Before their destined union the souls may form different unions
with diverse souls. But they do not become happy. Their union
does not last forever. Imperfect souls, in their blind hour,
form unhappy relationships. When the twin-souls recognize each
other and the harmony of love throbs in them, they do not separate
from each other. "Soul rushes to soul, — heart leaps to
heart, — and all form and ceremony, custom and usage crumble
into dust before the power that overwhelms them."⁻ Santoris in

The Life Everlasting is trained in the mystery of love and life.

He blames society for its inability to understand the inevita-
table law of love. With a scientific example he tries to explain
its nature: "Just as the one point of vibration sympathetically
strikes the other in the system of wireless telegraphy,
so, despite millions and millions of intervening currents and
lines of divergence, the immortal soul-spark strikes its kindred
fire across a waste of worlds until they meet in the compelling

¹. The Life Everlasting, pp.390.
². ⁻ibid⁻, pp.165.
Creation itself is based on the principle of duality. While departing from her counterpart Alwyn on earth, the angel Edris says: "Fear not that I, Edris will forsake thee— I, who have loved thee since the birth of Time!" In the beginning the souls lived in Heaven but, later, some of them fell down to earth due to their pride. Edris gives the reason for Alwyn's fall: "Thou beloved one! Thou whose spirit was formerly equal to mine; and to all angels, in God's sight though through pride it fell!" Man and woman should follow the voice of their souls. They should experience first of all the oneness of their spiritual affinities. If they become blind in their desire for each other through outward beauty and follow the impulse of their flesh without giving scope to spirit, they may become disappointed in their later life. Only the union of perfect souls can help them to achieve higher things in life. "Love must be born in the Soul and of the Soul. It must be a dual flame, that is to say it must find its counterpart in another soul which is its ordained mate, before it can fulfil its highest needs. Then, like wings moved by the same soaring impulse, it assists the Will and carries it to the highest Heaven."  

2. Ardath, pp. 442.  
The union of twin souls leads to higher forms of life. It is a firm step towards eternal life. One soul cannot kindle the divine love in another soul by force. It is a natural spring. The destined souls come together naturally and recognize each other. It is the psychic attraction that brings them close together. The heroine of *The Life Everlasting* narrates how she was captured by the love of Santoris: "That love was the magnet drawing me irresistibly, despite my own endeavour, to something I could neither understand nor imagine."

The destined souls are not hindered by considerations of time or space. They may be born at any place, on earth and at any period of time. In some of their births they may even become hostile to each other and may be blind to their own spiritual affinities. But the law of love creates opportunities of bringing them together. In *The Master Christian*, Manuel says to the painter Angela that the twin souls, while living apart, do see and hear each other in their inner world. "Otherwise there would be cruelty in creating the grace of love at all ... Those who love truly can never be parted, - death has no power over their souls. If one is on earth and one in Heaven, what does it matter? If they were in separate countries of the world they could hear news of each other from time to time, - and so they can when apparent death has divided them." The destined pairs

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of souls can recall memories of their former birth or births even at their first acquaintance. The soul can recall the most ancient memories. But this faculty is often dormant in human beings. The heroine of The Life Everlasting did not feel that her twin-soul, Santoris, was a stranger: "What had happened to me was simply that I had by a curious chance or a series of changes been brought into connection again with the individual soul of man whom I had known and loved ages ago." She observes that such a phenomenon does not seem strange to an occultist. Sceptics may not believe it. But even average human beings sometimes experience the memories of their past life unknowingly. "To the psychist, such a circumstance does not seem as strange as it is to the great majority of people who realise no greater force than Matter, and who have no comprehension of Spirit, and no wish to comprehend it, though even the dullest of these often find themselves brought into contact with persons whom they feel they have met and known before, and are unable to understand why they receive such an impression." Santoris writes a letter to the hesitant heroine, addressing her as if she were his fiancee about their acquaintance in former lives. He reminds her of their inevitable union at the end. "Beloved, - I call you by

1. The Life Everlasting, pp.263.
2. Ibid, pp.268-269.
this name as I have always called you through many cycles of time, - it should sound upon your ears as familiarly as a note of music struck in response to another similar note in far distance.'

The moment their eyes met their souls rushed together in a sudden ecstasy. The emotion which trilled them was beyond reason and analysis. On another occasion the heroine of this same novel sees the former lives of herself and Santoris in some of her visions. The union of twin-souls is not a mirage. It cannot be obstructed by any power. The intervention of some other force may only postpone the destined union. It cannot do anything more. "The parted threads are brought together again in the eternal weaving of Spirit and Matter." When men and women see each other's identity, they should try to come together instead of avoiding each other, though attempts may be made to create discord between them. Their union is "as inevitable as that of two electrons which, after spinning in space for certain periods, of time, rush together at last and remain so indissolubly united that nothing can ever separate them."

Corelli tries to prove the truth of her theory of twin-souls by giving various illustrations of married and unmarried

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1. The Life Everlasting, pg. 273.
2. --Ibid-- pp. 75.
3. --Ibid-- pp. 243-44.
men and women in her novels. She attaches more significance to successful marriages. Marriage is not merely a social contract. It is a spiritual tie that unites together two souls by the invisible power of divine love. The desire of the flesh is a secondary thing in a true love union. Two souls need each other for the higher purposes of life. Man has to be conscious of the spark of God in himself and of its evolution towards perfection. Corelli thinks that his union in love with another soul gives man a new impetus towards spiritual progress. Marriage is not an impediment. Happy couples are one in spirit. John Donne expresses their oneness of spirit beautifully in "The Good -- Narrow":

"My face in thine eye, thine in mine appears,
And two plain hearts do in the faces rest."

An Angel, in The Life Everlasting, describes ideal love: "Love must be tender yet resolved! -- Love must not swerve from its given pledge! -- Love must be All or Nothing!" The perfect union of two souls is the bloom of their eternal happiness. A soul should seek its salvation through its twin. One cannot be happy without the other. An Angel advises the heroine of The Life Everlasting regarding her twin soul: "One rose from all the roses in Heaven. ... One--fadeless and immortal! -- only one,

1. The Life Everlasting. pp.75.
but sufficient for all! One love from all the million loves of men and women - one, but enough for Eternity! How long the rose has awaited its flowering, - how long the love has awaited its fulfilment - only the recording angels know! Such roses bloom but once in the wilderness of space and time; such love comes but once in a Universe of worlds!  

Unsuccessful marriages are the result of the union of ill-assorted souls. Persons who have no spiritual affinities come together being ruled by their physical instincts. But within a short period they realise their mistake. The whole glamour of life seems to them spotted. They become disillusioned and helpless. Misery overshadows their life. A millennial, Tempest, tells us about his disillusionment regarding his marriage: "My marriage was nothing but the mere mating of the male and female animal, - a coarse bodily union, and no more; - that all the finer and deeper emotions which make a holy thing of human wedlock, were lacking, - the mutual respect, the trusting sympathy, - the lovely confidence of mind with mind, - the subtle inner spiritual bond which no science can analyse, and which is so much closer and stronger than the material, and knits immortal souls together when bodies decay - these things had no existence, and never would exist between my wife and me." The married men and women, who are disappointed, spend

1. The Life Everlasting. pp. 76.
their life in frustration; or they try to find new means of 
pleasure in the company of others. That leads to degeneration.

Corelli thinks that the love which attracts 
the twin souls together is overpowering. It is a psychic 
process. If a person experiences a feeling of antipathy at 
the first sight of the person with whom he or she is thinking of marriage, it is good for both of them to drop the idea once. A well-calculated marriage may be useful from the point of view of social respectability or material prosperity. But if it is not based on spiritual affinity, it loses its sanctity.

Men and women do not understand and the law of love. The law brings the twin souls together sooner or later at some place in the universe. But men and women hasten to enter into clinical relationships. "A hasty attachment is held to be dishonourable, 
because time is the true test." Blind passion lands lovers into tragedy. "The wrong halves mated, - the right halves finding each other out and rushing together recklessly and inopportune because of the resistless law which draws them

together, - this is the explanation of many a life's disaster and despair, as well as many a life's splendid attainment and victory. Successful marriage depends less on material fortune and more on the essential wealth of souls. In the recognition of each other's essential nature seems to lift the mystery of love and life. Heliobas tells the heroine of A Romance of Two Worlds: "You will have to impart your own force to that other soul, which will, in turn, impart to yours a corresponding electric impetus. There is no union so lovely as such an one - no harmony so exquisite, it is like a perfect part chord, complete and indissoluble." The meeting of twin souls is a lucky event. It occurs very rarely. An Angel says to the heroine of The Life Everlasting: "Keep the gift God sends thee! - take that which is thine! Meet that which hath sought thee sorrowing for many centuries! Turn not aside again neither by thine own will nor by the will of others, lost old errors prevail!" If the twin souls avoid each other through some fatal error, they may have to wait for centuries for another opportunity.

There is no compulsion that the twin souls should unite here on earth. Some of the souls may find their twins on earth.

1. The Life Everlasting, p. 268.
3. The Life Everlasting, p. 77.
But some others may not meet their counterparts at all. Such spirits find their twin souls in their next birth or births on earth or in some other part of the universe. If in no other place, they can then come together definitely in Heaven.

In his psychical research Heliobas in *A Romance of Two Worlds* discovers his 'other half of existence' - Asul, in the world of Angels. But the current of pure love which flows in all the worlds of the universe is the same. By his high spiritual attainment and the power of love Heliobas commands Asul to guide the liberated soul of the heroine in *A Romance of Two Worlds* in the other spheres of the universe. Heliobas's sister, Zara, in the same novel is most beautiful physically. At the same time she is rich in occult knowledge. The prince Ivan, being fascinated by her bodily charm, asks her to accept his love. But he is just an epicurean. Zara does not encourage his love. She says to him: "The laws of attraction and repulsion are fixed by a higher authority than yours, and you are as powerless to alter or abate them by one iota."¹ The angel Edris in *Arden*, seeing the pathetic look and entreaty of love of her twin soul, Alwyn, gives up her angelic form and, assuming a maiden's form, she joins him on earth. Instead of waiting alone for him in Heaven she felt that it would be

better to live with him on earth. Alone, a soul cannot get happiness even in Heaven. Happiness lies in the union of twin souls in any part of the universe. But the union in Heaven gives them not only happiness but immortality, eternity of existence. Edris tells Alwyn about her deliberate choice of earthly life with him. "Theos, my Beloved, I am all thine! ... Thine now in mortal life as in immortal! — one with thee in nature and condition, — pent up in perishable clay, even as thou art, — subject to sorrow, and pain and weariness, willing to share with thee thine earthly lot, — ready to take my part in thy grief or joy! By my own choice have I come hither, — sinless, yet not exempt from sin, but safe in Christ! ... O my poet, my lord, my king! — we are together for ever more, — together in the brief Present as in the eternal future! — the solitary heaven-days of Edris are past, and her mission is not Death but love!" — In *The Soul of Lilith*,

El-Rami — a student of occult knowledge, says to the woman-novelist, Irene Vassilius, that her twin-soul is not on the earth and that her union with the twin soul will take place in some other world. The woman novelist, Mavis Clare, in *The Sorrows of Satan*, is also a spinster. She has dreamed of her married love. But it has not yet become a reality. Many

years of her waiting for her twin-soul have not disappointed her. She is sure of her union with her counterpart in course of time, in one world or the other. "I have dreamed of love," she says, "but because I have not realized my dream I am not the less content. If it is God's will that I should be alone all my days, I shall not murmur. . . and that I shall fully realize my dream of love one day I am sure - if not hereafter." Shakespeare did not quite mean all this when he wrote:

"Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks,
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks
But bears it out even to the edge of doom."

In Ziska, the princess Ziska and the painter Armond, with all their vindictive life in former births, were united in the end, because they were the destined twin-souls. The heroine of The Life Everlasting is filled with joy at her attainment of spiritual knowledge and the fulfillment of her soul's desire. She says in her inexpressible ecstasy: "Then I knew . . . that I had won all I wanted in this world and the next, and that nothing could ever separate our Souls, one from the other, again! This is the deep eternal ecstasy of a knowledge

1. The Sorrows of Satan. pg.138.
2. Shakespeare's Sonnet. No.CXVI.
divinely shared by the very angels of God, and of such supernal happiness nothing can be said or written. 1

In some passages in The Life Everlasting, Corelli seems to propagate the doctrine of Free Love. Men and women should follow their psychical preference in matters of love. They should recognize their twin souls and form lasting unions. The souls see in each other the presence of Absolute Beauty. Their union is not seasonal. It is constant and everlasting. The heroine of The Life Everlasting sees the tragic death of two lovers in her vision. Their death pricks her conscience. She begins to brood over it. Why should not men and women follow the natural law of love in their affairs of love instead of social and religious conventions? It is Nature that succeeds in the end, not man's regulations. Love is God's essence. It overcomes all hurdles. Why should man thrust his law on true lovers? "Was it right", she asks herself "that the two perfect lines of a mutual love should be swept asunder? ... Would it not be well if we all occasionally remembered that there is an eternal law of harmony between souls as between spheres? ... Of what use, then, is the struggle we are forever making in our narrow and limited daily lives to resist the wise and holy teaching of Nature? Is it not best to yield to

1. The Life Everlasting, pp. 430 and 431.
the insistence on the music of life while it sounds in our ears? For everything must come round to Nature's way in the end - her way being God's way, and God's way the only way!

Santoris, in the same novel, also emphasises the natural law of Love. The union of true lovers does not require the sanction of society. Their love, being pure, links them together throughout their life. Mr. Harland remarks about the ideas of Santoris on love. "Convention and Santoris are farther apart than the poles! ... He looks upon marriage itself as a tacit acknowledgement of inconstancy in love, and declares that if the passion existed in its truest form between man and woman any sort of formal or legal tie would be needless, - as love, if it be love, does not and cannot change."

Shelley was also an advocate of free love apart from being a platonist. Some of the errors in his life were the result of his advocacy. But Shelley realised that it is an error to seek in a mortal form the image of what is perhaps eternal. Corelli's theory of twin souls is perhaps based on the 'destined' nature of twin souls and on the existence of the natural law of Love. It was, with her, a persistent belief.

Corelli extends the doctrine of twin souls even to human races. From the study of individuals she came to 'groups'. The races try to come together but often engender hostility

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among themselves: "The mischief runs through all civilisation, -
wrong halves of races brought together which do not and never
can assimilate." A victorious race can not easily live in
harmony with the defeated. They can live together in harmony
only on the basis of equality, mutual respect and sympathetic
understanding, like twin souls. Otherwise, as with all-assorted
souls, discord continues forever.

The goal of twin souls is the attainment of immortality
and eternity in Heaven. They live as spirits in Heaven, according
to Corelli. But later, due to their pride and love of earth
some souls suffer a fall. Some twin souls are thus separated
from each other and till they come together again, they cannot
attain immortality and eternity in Heaven. It is for this reason
that they transmigrate in search of each other. The Angel
Edris remarks regarding the cause of Alwyn's fall in Ardath:
"All Heaven has wondered at thy voluntary exile, - thy place
in God's supernal sphere has long been vacant, - thy right to
dwell there none have questioned, - thy throne is empty, - thy
crown unclaimed. ". Through the purification of his material
soul has Alwyn to regain his lost glory.

The union of twin souls is not an end in itself. It is
a step towards higher spiritual progress. The spiritual bond

helps them in their evolution. The union gives them new impetus and becomes an essential step in their progress. By their union they become 'new wholes' or integrated personalities. Their united effort or their union gives them the bliss of Heaven at the end. They are parts of a single unit and have been disjointed. Hence Edris says to Alwyn: "Thou wert my soul's other soul, — my king! — my immortality's completion." ¹

No soul can realize individually the higher possibilities of its own life. It has to unite with its other half before achieving gradations of life. Santoris entreats his twin-soul, the heroine of The Life Everlasting, in this way: "Without you now I can do nothing more. I have done much — and much remains to be done — but if I am to attain, you must crown the attainment — if my ambition is to find completion, you alone can be its completeness." ²

The union enables them to realize the supernal nature of the spiritual world. The souls become more conscious of the ultimate values of Truth, Goodness and Beauty." "Everything is possible then! Beauty, perfection, wisdom, progress, creativeness, and a world — even worlds — of splendid thought and splendid ideals, bound to lead to still more splendid realization!" ³

When the twin souls are separate, even God cannot make them happy. Therefore the heroine of The Life Everlast—

³. The Life Everlasting. pp.244.
Lasting says: "If I had lost love [her twin-soul], then God Himself could give me no comfort, since the essential link with Divine things was broken."

Their union is a necessity. A marriage based on complete spiritual affinity is the firm foundation of an eternal union. Such a union is the grace of God. The love of Aubrey Leigh and Sylvie for each other was pure and self-sacrificing. Love made them dumb in each other's presence. "The silence that followed was as that of God's benediction on that perfect marriage which is scarcely ever consummated in this world, - the marriage of two souls, which like twin flames, unite and burn upward clear to Heaven, as One." Prospero blesses the union of Miranda and Ferdinand with a similar feeling in The Tempest.

"... Fair encounter

Of two most rare affections! Heaven rain grace

On that which breeds between them!"^3

But the love which exists between twin souls has its limitations. It links them together but it does not widen their vision of love and life. It is the love of God that gives them a broad vision of life and immortal happiness at the end in Heaven. Without love and faith in God no soul can make any higher progress.

The twin souls have to love God and make a combined effort to attain Him.

All souls belong ultimately to God. The purpose in their evolution is the attainment of God-hood. The twin souls belong to each other and ultimately they belong to God. If the twin souls think that their union is the highest attainment and if they belong to each other and to nobody else, then their progress is curtailed. When El-Rami addresses his twin soul, Lilith, as "my Lilith, my own forever," she says: "God's Lilith - God's own forever." While uniting together, they should not forget their higher achievement in the Divine.

An Angel advises the heroine of The Life Everlasting to have love for God. An intense love of God alone can solve the mystery of the universe. "Give all thy heart and soul to Love if thou wouldst be immortal! - for without Love thou mayst seek God through all Eternity and never find Him!" The divine spark craves always for its original source and the accomplishment of its desire is possible only through man's faith in God and through his spiritual progress. The twin souls live united in the presence of God and partake of His Bliss.

Marie Corelli has not mentioned anywhere the sources from which she imbibed the doctrine of twin souls. In some passages

1. The Soul of Lilith. pp.316.
she seems to suggest that her doctrine is based on some of the passages in the New Testament and on the conception of the androgynous nature of the Creator. In any case it is not altogether a new doctrine. It seems to have been hotly discussed and argued upon by theosophists in her age. There is the theory of two halves in the Symposium of Plato. Blavatsky has discussed the theory in her Isis Unveiled. But her explanation differs from the point of view adopted by Corelli. Corelli might even have discussed this doctrine with some theosophists and the dialogues of Plato, Corelli seems to have formed a new doctrine of her own to suit her theory of the immortality of the souls in Heaven.

The dual principle of male and female is expressed in animal life, plant life and human life in the universe. God is the Creator of the universe. It is cosmic love that made Him create it. Love, the essential power of God is dual in its nature. In other words, God possesses the power of the duality of male and female. Corelli accepted this androgynous nature of God. The monk Aselsion describes the combined attributes of male and female in the Governing Intelligence in The Life Everlasting. The mystic Santoris refers to the duality of creation in the same novel. The monk Heliobas also illustrates with some examples of duality of the universe, in A Romance

2. Ibid. pp. 240.
of Two Worlds. The hermaphroditic nature of the Creator is only a hypothesis even as the Creator Himself is. Man cannot delve into these transcendental questions. If the Creator created man and woman as separate individuals on earth as an expression of His dual entity, why are they compelled to unite before their attainment of immortality and eternity in Heaven? Do the disembodied souls possess sex? The souls of man and woman, says Corelli, do not become God by the mere fact of their union. Even after their union, they have to purify themselves before entering Heaven. These are baffling questions and we need not discuss them. We are only trying to expound Corelli's views on the subject.

Heliobas finds in the appearance of the Holy Ghost the dual entity of God. He gives a new interpretation to the descent of the Holy Ghost. He quotes a passage from the New Testament, Acts of the Apostles II lines 10-14, as an illustration of his explanation. "The descent of the Holy Ghost, by which term is meant an ever flowing current of the inspired working Intelligence of the Creator, was purely electric in character: 'Suddenly there came a sound from Heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared into them cloven tongues

like as of fire; and sat upon each of them. It may here be noted that the natural electric flame is dual or 'cloven' in shape. It has already been explained that Corelli means by 'electricity' the 'power of the soul'. The natural electric flame of the above passage refers to the Holy Ghost. Hence God is 'cloven in shape'. He possesses the attributes of both male and female. By interpreting this passage in the New Testament to suit her doctrine of twin souls Corelli seems to trace the ultimate origin of her theory to the Bible. But the passage does not fit in with her theory clearly and fully. It looks farfetched and quite vague. It does not appear to be the only source for her doctrine of twin souls.

In the Symposium of Plato, while praising the God of Love, the comedian Aristophanes employs coarse and forcible imagery while speaking of the two halves. Originally, there were three sexes and not two, masculine, feminine and the union of the two. The beings possessing these three sexes were round in shape. Each original man had two faces, four hands, four feet and two organs of the male sex. Each original woman had two faces, four hands, four feet and two organs of the female sex. The original man-woman possessed double features of the bodies of opposite sexes — one of man and another of

woman. "The primeval man was round and had four hands and
four feet, back and sides forming a circle, one head with two
faces, looking opposite ways, set on a round neck and precisely
alike; also four ears, two privy members, and the remainder
to correspond."

These beings had great strength. One
ey even attacked the gods. To teach them a lesson, Zeus cut
them into two equal parts so as to make them two beings. Later
as commanded by Zeus, Apollo reshaped the bodies of the halves
in the form of the present day man and woman. But the divided
parts of the primeval beings of three sexes were not satisfied
ed with their half existence. Each sought its other half
and by embracing it desired again to grow into one. "When one
of the halves died and the other survived, the survivor sought
another mate, whether the section of an entire man or an entire
woman, which had usurped the name of man and woman, and
clung to that." Seeing the destruction of the halves, Zeus
made the male halves unite with the female halves for the con
continuation of the race. Men and women are halves. They become
'swolles' when they form unions with their counter parts of
the opposite sex. "Each of us when separated is but the inden\ure
rene of a man, having one side only like a flat fish, and he is
is always looking for his other half." It is natural that the

2. Ibid— pp. 507.
halves should desire to take again their original shape by uniting with their counterparts. Aristophanes says in conclusion: "This meeting and melting in one another's arms, this becoming one instead of two was the very expression of his ancient need. And the reason is that human nature was originally one and we were a whole, and the desire and pursuit of the whole is called love."¹

This monstrous description of the primeval man and the comic gestures of Aristophanes in the middle of his talk may lead one to think of his discourse on love as sheer nonsense. But is there any philosophical truth in this gross myth? Or is it merely a parody? Ancient philosophers and prophets presented their principles, many times in the form of allegories and myths. Plato himself presents his idea of the evolution of the human soul through the allegory of 'a pair of winged horses and a Charioteer' in his Phaedrus. An editor of The Dialogues of Plato, Jowett, finds a mixture of earnestness and in the humorous discourse of Aristophanes. He observes that three serious principles are asserted in it. "First, that man cannot exist in isolation; he must be reunited if he is to be perfected: Secondly that love is the mediator and reconciler of poor, divided human nature: thirdly, that the loves of this world are an indistinct anticipation of an ideal union, which

is not yet realised."¹ What is this 'ideal union' of the future? Is it the union of the human soul with God or is the union of twin souls in Heaven? This myth of halves has given rise to a controversy since Plato's time. In modern times the theosophists think that the myth refers to the union of all souls with God. Love links man and woman together on earth. Their happy union on earth may be a token of their eternal union in Heaven.

Theosophists do not accept the doctrine of twin souls as conceived by Corelli. They do not emphasize the union of two souls of opposite sexes as a prerequisite for the attainment of immortality by an individual soul in Heaven. They do not attribute sex to a soul. Irrespective of any help from any other soul, each soul has to strive itself for its salvation. The salvation of every soul depends on its own spiritual attainment. Corelli does not follow the theosophists closely in their doctrine of the immortality of the soul. But she seems to make use of their explanation of the 'trinity' of man. Blavatsky has explained the trinity of man: "Man is ... triune: he has his objective, physical body; his vitalizing astral body or soul, the real man; and these two are brooded over and illuminated by the third - the sovereign, the immortal spirit. When the real man succeeds in merging

himself with the latter, he becomes an immortal entity. \(^1\) The soul of man acts as a medium between spirit and the human body. If it is blind to its future progress and forgets itself in the company of the body, it regresses to a lower species of life that of animals and worms. It transmigrates from one body to another until its complete purification from its lower impulses is achieved. It gets release only after its union with God. Who, it is said, receives all souls at the gates of Heaven through His Spirit, and makes them immortal. Blavatsky reports a conversation, (with an explanation), at the gates of Heaven between a disembodied soul and Spirit. "Who art thou, a fair being?" inquires the disembodied soul, in the Khordat -Avesta, at the gates of Paradise. 'I am, O Soul, thy good and pure thoughts, thy works and thy good law... thy angel... and thy god'. Then man, or the soul, is reunited with ITSELF, for this 'son of God' is one with him; it is his own mediator, the god of his human soul and his 'Justifier'. 'God not revealing himself immediately to man, the spirit is his interpreter', says Plato in the Banquet.\(^2\) In another passage in Isis Unveiled, Blavatsky uses a metaphor and speaks of all souls as feminine and the Spirit of God as masculine. It is by their union with the Divine Husband that all souls win their salvation. "The Sohar teaches that the souls cannot reach the abode of bliss, unless

she has received the 'holy kiss', or the reunion of the soul with the substance from which she emanated - spirit. All souls are dual, and while the latter is a feminine principle, the spirit is masculine. The soul which is in communion with God is dual. It is a combination of the rational soul in man and the Spirit of God. In her various expositions of the subject, Blavatsky is frequently obscure. How far Corelli understood her works is itself doubtful. If Blavatsky groups all human souls figuratively as feminine, Corelli divides them literally into two sexes as masculine and feminine according as they belong to men or women. Corelli does not say that each soul get its release through its high attainment of spiritual knowledge directly from God. She posits the union of twin souls of different sexes as an essential step towards salvation.

All the time of the publication of the first novel of Marie Corelli, spiritualists and theosophists were quite popular in England and America. Seances were conducted. Spiritual phenomena were discussed and argued upon at meetings and in periodicals. These are a few passages about twin souls in a Collection of Extracts from The Vahan, which show clearly how

2. Note on The Vahan — According to the publisher's note since 1891 The Vahan was the journal devoted to an exchange of views among members of the European Section of the Theosophical Society. The "Extracts from the Vahan" was published by the Theosophical Publishing Society, London and Benares, in 1904.
far Corelli is indebted to theosophical works and theosophists in formulating her doctrine of twin souls. The doctrine of twin souls seems to have been a theory propounded by spiritualists. The theory might have been a burning topic among theosophists also even before the publication of the first novel of Corelli, *A Romance of Two Worlds*, in 1886. The passages on twin souls, referred to above, are in question and answer form. They throw some light on the genesis of the doctrine. An enquiry was made about twin souls by an enthusiast through *The Vahan*:

"I have heard that spiritualists have what they term twin-souls, which they believe appear on earth as two different persons, and finally, after passing through various other stages on other planes, become one complete being. Others speak of something similar under the name of companion souls, or counterparts. There must be some fundamental truth underlying all these ideas; what is this truth?"

Some of the leading theosophists answered this question in *The Vahan*. One 'G.R.S.M.' wrote:

"Long, long before 'spiritualists' were heard of, ... the mystic Creek of the Orphic tradition had some theory that the original male-female female soul, as a punishment for its daring, had been divided by God, and now each part went about in the cycle of necessity seeking for its fellow. This theory, when worked out on the lines of the Gnostic Sophiatus and applied to spiritual

1. Extracts from *The Vahan*, ed. by Sarah Corbett, pp.645-47."
things explains in admirable fashion the passion of the individual soul, its salvation and much else, but when taken in its grossest form and applied to the mystery of sex, it simply exalts that impermanency from the rank of the Lesser to that of the Greater Mysteries, and so degrades the 'Divine Marriage' to a a psalnic debauch of the most insidious nature. In Corelli's doctrine of twin souls it is clear that she applied the theory to the 'mystery of sex'. One 'A.W.' calls the theory an allegory and refers it to the communion of the human soul with God:

"We are all more or less conscious of the duality of the personality and of the personality. In some high moment of aspiration ... the spark from the Divine shut off in the darkness of a body and chained down by that body's personal Karma, has yet beheld its glorious twin, the radiant Augoeides, and knows of a certainty that the two are one ... and that soul wanders hereafter seeking in its prison house of flesh that glorious mate, never content until after ages of upward striving and purification it is united to the object of its devotion and the two are again one." Another writer, 'E.L.' referring to the theory to the myth narrated in 'The Symposium' of Plato says: "The spiritualist idea seems to be a modern version


2. Ibid. pp. 645-47.
of this. There is a fundamental truth underlying all these ideas, and it is that the present division into sex seems to be a temporary stage in evolution, that it was preceded by an androgyne or sexless period, and may be, in far ages to come, will be followed by a similar period, but with the additional experience of all these vast intermediate periods crowning it. Duality, in whatever sense is imperfection. Unity is the bed-rock of things." These explanations of the theory of twin souls might have helped Corelli to form her own version of the doctrine. It is quite possible that, because of her close contact with some theosophists, she might have read the issues of theosophical magazines such as The Vahana or, at any rate discussed the subject with the theosophists whom she knew. She did not quite accept the views of theosophists in the matter, she seems to have accepted the theory of spiritualists regarding twin souls and modified it here and there in the light of the views of theosophists. She attributed sex to souls and stressed the importance of the union of twin souls as an essential step towards salvation. She did not think that such a union was the end of their progress. This would have been a 'psychic debauch'. She conceived the union as an essential step in the evolution towards God.

1. Extract from The Vahana, ed. by Sarah Corbett. pp. 645-47.
Before concluding this chapter, it would be better to dispose of some of the problems which arise out of Corelli's statements on the subject. While discussing the creation of the universe Corelli says that God is pure Love. In The Master Christian also it is said that God Himself is love. But Corelli herself has described Love as the main power of God and as the breath of God in The Life Everlasting. Love is the mediator between man and God. It is His main force which draws His Creation to Himself and it brings God nearer to His Creation. Then Love is of God, but it cannot be God Himself in his entirety. It is only one of His attributes. Corelli seems to have been aware of this difference. It is only for the sake of emphasising the power of love, that she remarks that God is Love. While writing on love, Corelli might have remembered a passage in the New Testament in which it is said that God is Love: "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is begotten of God and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love." This is also how it is summed up in the Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics: "This is interpreted as meaning not only that God, self-conscious, wise and moral, creates, sustains, and orders all things in

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1. A Romance of Two Worlds, pg. 229.
2. The Master Christian, pg. 178.
3. The Life Everlasting, pg. 71.
Corelli says that the love, which springs at the first acquaintances of twin souls, is overpowering. The twin souls are fascinated by each other. They rush towards each other. Love at first sight is also presented in Shakespeare's plays. Ferdinand and Miranda change eyes at first sight. "The very instant that I saw you, did my heart fly to your service," says Ferdinand to Miranda. Shakespeare laughed at the frailty of lovers in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Corelli knew the power of physical love. Only, she posited divine or spiritual love as an even greater—force than the physical. "There is something else—something more subtle and delicate, which escapes the analysis of both philosophers and Scientist. Moreover it is an imperative spiritual sense, as well as a material craving, the soul can no more be satisfied without love than the body." Corelli thinks that human beings should depend on their intuitive perception while entering into marriage. If their inner urge compels them to unite, they should do so at any cost. But whether the perception is intuitive or just physically romantic, only the gods can decide.

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Corelli believes in the existence of twin souls in Heaven. The twin souls which have not united on earth or in any other sphere, come together in Heaven and live in communion with God. Corelli attributes sex to the twin souls in Heaven also. In this, she seems to have been partly influenced by the Christian conception of Heaven. According to Christian belief, the redeemed souls live in communion with God in Heaven. They even possess bodies. But it is difficult to reconcile Corelli's theory of the immortality and evolution of the soul with her doctrine of twin souls. Corelli says elsewhere that soul is the pure Godhead.\(^1\) It has no material touch. Every soul has to expiate its sin through its own spiritual effort before it achieves salvation. She says in the prologue to The Life Everlasting: "Each human soul shall shape its own eternal future. No one mortal can make the happiness or salvation of another."\(^2\) She also believed that every spiritual journey ends in God. The soul longs always to return to the original place of the Divine.\(^3\) In her exposition of her theory of the immortality and the evolution of the soul, Corelli does not generally intermix her doctrine of twin souls. It is only when she deals with the doctrine of twin souls in relation to Heaven

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1. A Romance of Two Worlds. p.22.
3. The Soul of Lilith. p.221.
that a discrepancy arises in her statements. But the disparity is probably more apparent than real. For she speaks of the union of twin souls only as a preparatory step towards the communion with God.

It is clear that the doctrine of twin souls is fatalistic. The lives of men and women are predestined. It is God's decree that the twin souls should unite with each other before their salvation. Evasion only puts off their salvation. Santorius writes in his letter to the heroine of *The Life Everlasting*:

"We have played with fate against each other and sometimes striven to escape from each other, all in vain." Corelli also believes in the transmigration of souls. According to the law of compensation or Karma, man's future depends mainly on his own actions. God has given him free will to build up his own character. Through his evil deeds man suffers one birth after another. His salvation depends on his self purification. His soul has to throw off all its material vesture before its reunion with God. The law of compensation and the law of love work together on human beings and mould their future. Both of them are the laws of God.

Corelli's consistent attempt to incorporate theosophical principles into a Christian framework, has not met with the

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approval either of Christians or of theosophists. Regarding the doctrine of twin souls, she goes a step further and imports a spiritualist notion in the framework. It does not quite upset her blend of theosophy and Christianity, though the celestial part of the union of twin souls gives rise to certain difficulties. But no one can deny the fact that the theory has an exhilarating effect on the imagination of the reader. Corelli's own imagination was deeply stirred by it, as can be seen from her philosophic novels.

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