It is interesting to look back over the old files of the Society of the Inner Light to identify 'times of testing and dedication'. They come up from time to time over the course of the lifetime of the group – and indeed of any group.

One such is revealed in a trance address given by Dion Fortune at the Vernal Equinox of 1940 when the nation – and the Society along with it – had been plunged into the 2nd World War.

**Real occultism is however a lot less sensational (and disreputable) than it may appear to be,**

"We have already travelled a long way since the Group was formed. At present we are about to enter upon a new phase of what has up to now passed for a war and as a Group we are opening the inner Mysteries. Those of you who are gathered here have diverse gifts to bring to the Altar, but one quality you have in common – the quality of LOYALTY – and, whatever gifts you might bring to the Altar, if that quality were lacking they would be unacceptable. It is on the quality of loyalty that we build in the inner Group and you, by your loyalty, make many things possible for others. None who lack this quality are acceptable for the deeper training."

Indeed a new phase was coming in – much of which can be gleaned from the War Letters of Dion Fortune – subsequently published as Dion Fortune’s Magical Battle of Britain. A title perhaps erring on the sensational side, although it had its effect in attracting interest in the book, even if for the wrong reasons.

Those who expected a sensational tale of astral derring do on the lines of a Dennis Wheatley novel may have been disappointed, but at least there is no record of anyone being shocked as had been the case with Dion Fortune's The Winged Bull, hurling it across the room in disgust with fears that it might corrupt the garbage men. Although I have in the past been barred from one reputable spiritual organisation when I offered to speak upon the subject – "magic" being a no go word in some quarters – let alone magical battles! And another refuses even to sell me their books lest they be corrupted by taking my money.

Real occultism is however a lot less sensational (and disreputable) than it may appear to be, even if it packs a considerable punch at levels that are not readily appreciated by the general public. Hence the

(Note: This is an extract from an article in The Journal of The Society of The Inner Light, Spring 2016. To order your copy, please contact us at http://www.innerlight.org.uk/)